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Problem of the Future

CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

The Soviet Concordat

KSAWERY PRUSZYNSKI

The Obedience of a Christian  
Man

W. E. CAMPBELL

Japan's New Structure  
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A CORRESPONDENT FROM JAPAN

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# The Dublin Review

JANUARY, 1944

No. 428

## RELIGION AND MASS CIVILIZATION—THE PROBLEM OF THE FUTURE

LET us face the facts: nobody knows what is going to happen to our civilization. It is easy to make plans—Five year plans or Fifty year plans—it is easy, and attractive, to draw up programmes for the world we want after the war. But if history is any guide, there is little reason to suppose that the world we want is the world we are going to get. A great war is not a matter of human choice. On the contrary, it marks the point at which events pass out of human control. It is a kind of social convulsion—an eruption of the forces which lie dormant like the subterranean fires of a volcano on the slopes of which man builds his cities and cultivates his fields. If we look at any of the great wars of history—the Hundred Years War, the Thirty Years War, the Wars of the French Revolution—we see that their results are entirely different from anything that the leaders and statesmen who were responsible for them imagined or desired. And if this was the case with the pigmy wars of the past, waged by professional armies in a neat pattern of battles and sieges, how much more with the two world wars that have overtaken us during the present generation—wars without shape or limit—total wars which absorb the entire effort of whole populations and affect the lives of hundreds of millions of men.

The rights and wrongs of the present struggle are so clear, the moral responsibility of Hitler and the Axis Powers is so plain, that it is easy for us to take a superficial view of the situation and to imagine that when once we have disposed of the Nazis and the Japanese, the problem will be settled and the world will have been made safe for democracy. But things are not so simple as that. Hitler and his like are not the creators of the world crisis, but its creatures who have been carried to power on the crest of the wave of destruction. Even Germany herself owes her importance to her weakness as much as to her strength. She is, as it were, the volcanic node where the spiritual fissures of our civilization intersect, the point at which the ordered surface of our society is broken through by the eruption of the subterranean forces.

And hence the activities of the modern planners and international reformers bear the same relation to the world crisis as the activities of a plumber or even a mining engineer to a

volcanic eruption. They are sensible and rational and scientific, but they belong to an essentially different plane from that of the forces which they are attempting to master. The foundations of our world are shaken and we shall not save it by replanning the superstructure.

What, then, is the real nature of the problem?

An immense material and technical revolution has taken place which has entirely changed the conditions of human life without any corresponding change in human nature. The revolution has been the work of a minority—of a few men in a few societies—but the results of it affect everybody and they are being progressively adopted and applied by all societies to all men. The result is that there has been no time to train man in the use of his new powers. We take the peasant from his bullock-wagon and teach him to drive an automobile, then we teach him to drive a tank or an aeroplane, and before he realizes what has happened—while his mind is still unconsciously embedded in the folk ways of his peasant ancestors—he finds himself a unit in a mass that is being irresistibly impelled forwards in a race of industrial production or military destruction, which he is powerless to understand or control.

This rapidity of change, this sudden diffusion of the achievements of modern science and technology, was welcome by the nineteenth century as an absolute good—as the advance of progress and enlightenment at the expense of ignorance and barbarism. And it was especially welcomed by liberal opinion in Western Europe and America as an essentially democratic process—the practical realization of the principle of equality and the rights of the common man. It was only by degrees that men began to realize that the change in social scale caused by the unlimited extension of industrial and scientific techniques also involved a serious threat to democracy, and even today the lesson has not been fully learned. For while mass-society is favourable to democracy in so far as it destroys hereditary privilege and traditional authority and represents a general tendency towards uniformity and equalization, at the same time it is hostile to freedom, since it reduces the control of the individual over his own life and makes him the instrument of collective forces on which his very existence depends. The fathers of the democratic tradition—English squires like Hampden and Cromwell and Vane, Virginian planters like Washington and Jefferson, New England lawyers and publicists like the Adamses and Benjamin Franklin—were all of them very highly conscious of the importance of the individual personality as the ultimate and indestructible social value. They regarded the state as the servant and guarantee of

their individual rights, and in so far as they envisaged the advance of science and economic organization they looked on them as opening a wider field for individual initiative, not as creating an organization by which the life of the individual would be standardized and controlled.

But the situation was utterly different when the movement passed to societies that knew nothing of this tradition of personal freedom, societies in which human life was cheap, where the individual was nothing and the state and the masters of the state were everything. So long as the new techniques were the monopoly of the same peoples who had produced the individualist culture, as was the case throughout the greater part of the nineteenth century, the difficulty did not arise: liberty, democracy, and scientific technique were allies. But as soon as the movement had become world-wide, when the era of the masses had begun, it became clear that liberty and scientific efficiency were not necessarily united. The societies which had no experience of, or respect for, freedom were in some ways better adapted to scientific mass organization than those which put the rights of the individual first. And it was here that the German development acquired such crucial importance, since it was in Germany that the new scientific techniques were first harnessed and controlled by a centralized military state. Already in the eighteenth century Prussia had gone further than any earlier state in the scientific organization of its people for war, and the drill sergeants of Frederick the Great had solved in advance the problem of how to convert a multitude of individuals with different temperaments and degrees of intelligence into a mass machine which could be manipulated with automatic precision by a single mind and will.

This mass conditioning of the Prussian people two centuries ago not only made a profound impression on the national character and tradition, but also provided a pattern of military and bureaucratic efficiency which was accepted by the other peoples of Central and Eastern Europe, above all by Russia, whose German rulers showed a marked preference for German men and German methods in the administration of their empire.

In the course of the nineteenth century these military empires gradually divested themselves of their feudal and theocratic elements; until, with the First World War, the moment came when the dynasties themselves collapsed and the mass organization of the state was brought into direct and immediate relation with the mass organism of the people.

This was the origin of the phenomenon which we call the Totalitarian State—a system which can be called democratic inas-

much as it represented the rule of the masses, but which was entirely hostile to the ideals of freedom and humanity and the rights of the individual citizen which are inseparable from the democratic tradition as we have always understood it in the West.

We must, however, face the fact that the mass state can be no less efficient than the free state and that in certain respects it is even better adapted to the new scale and tempo due to the universal extension of modern scientific techniques. Moreover, at the same time that these new Leviathans were growing up in the East, Western democracy was itself following a parallel development towards mass organization. Democratic parties, the democratic press and the democratic organization of labour have acquired a very different character from that which they possessed a century ago. They no longer offer the same field for open discussion and free individual initiative. The statesman who speaks to a constituency of sixty or seventy millions is dealing with a situation which is qualitatively and not merely quantitatively different from that which existed in the early years of the Republic. And the same is true of the industrialist or labour leader who no longer has to deal with the competition of individuals, but with anonymous economic masses whose behaviour must be studied with the scientific detachment of an astronomer or a meteorologist. Our Western ideas of political and economic freedom, our concepts of free speech and government by discussion, our ideas of property and wealth and leisure, even our ideals of education and culture, were all framed under different conditions in a different society. They come from an age when states numbered a few million inhabitants and a few hundred thousand politically active citizens. It is only with difficulty that they can maintain themselves in a world that has become a single power area—where states number their populations by the hundred million and where the whole of their populations are standardized by the same techniques and the pressure of the same economic forces.

Yet it is clear that we cannot abandon ourselves to the forces of change with the same optimistic faith with which our ancestors welcomed the age of progress. No one who is loyal to the spirit of Western civilization, whether in America or Europe, can accept the ethics of the totalitarian state, with its denial of human rights, its mass executions, and its ruthless liquidation of minorities, without moral disintegration. We are bound in honour not only to fight this evil abroad, but to prevent our own society following the same path.

And, as I have said, we cannot do this by economic planning,



essential as that may be; because the mass-state thrives on planning hardly less than on war. The real evil lies deeper—in the breach that has taken place between the technical development of our civilization and its spiritual life. In the last resort every civilization is built on a religious foundation: it is the expression in social institutions and cultural activity of a faith or a vision of reality which gives the civilization its spiritual unity. Thus the great world cultures correspond with the great world religions, and when a religion dies the civilization that it has inspired gradually decays. "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

The reason that we do not recognize this more clearly is mainly due to the difference in time-scale between the individual human life and the life of a civilization, so that the ordinary man is only aware of an infinitesimal aspect of the process of which he forms a part. When we speak of a civilization being secular or materialist, it does not mean that that civilization possesses no spiritual basis; it means that civilization has become temporarily extroverted and that its attention is concentrated on the practical aspects that lie on the surface of its consciousness.

This is what has happened in the case of our own civilization. There has never been a society so totally absorbed in the technique and equipment of civilization or more neglectful of the ultimate spiritual values for the sake of which the human race exists.

The civilizations of the past devoted a greater part of their slender resources to the service of these ultimate values than we can afford with all our wealth and power. Chartres and Amiens are as marvellous feats of material construction as any modern skyscraper or industrial plant. But whereas the latter exist only to serve a temporary need, the former express the very heart and soul of the culture. If a civilization is entirely concentrated on external activity, on techniques and mechanics, on means as distinct from ends, its gain in material power and control over nature is counterbalanced by a loss of harmony, a loss of balance between the inner and the outer worlds of experience, which causes it to exhaust its reserves of spiritual power and make it brittle and unstable.

We have a terrible object lesson of this before our eyes in the fate of modern Germany. No society devoted itself more successfully to the cult of technocracy, none accomplished greater feats of scientific organization. But it failed entirely to preserve its inner harmony and to protect the spiritual values which give civilization its ultimate justification. It became a mad race for unlimited power. And the result was that the social machine got out of control and the scientists and the

technologists became the servants and the slaves of the party that made the strongest appeal to the crudest and most elementary mass emotions. Now, owing to the reasons that I have already discussed, the German people is peculiarly predisposed to this kind of mass suggestion, especially when it is associated with the cult of military power. But, apart from this, the same problem exists for the whole of modern civilization, and we are none of us immune from these dangers, though they present themselves to us in less violent and shocking forms. But everywhere we see the same tendency to extroversion, the same depreciation of spiritual values and the same weakening of spiritual vitality.

In our case it has been the war of business and not the business of war that had absorbed our energies—a better and more human alternative we may say—but one which is no less far removed from the ultimate vision of reality, from what the makers of Europe, and the makers of America also, regarded as the true life—*vita beata*. For our civilization, like all the other great civilizations of the world, has its religious foundation, and its exceptional achievements are ultimately due to the tremendous spiritual dynamic of its religious impulse. This impulse still makes itself felt in modern civilization, and it is impossible to understand many of the most representative modern statesmen and thinkers unless we recognize the influence, both conscious and unconscious, of this spiritual tradition that unites them with the original source of Western culture.

If we regard our civilization as an organic whole and not merely in its local and temporary manifestations we shall see that it contains unsuspected depths of spiritual power and knowledge. The immense extension of our civilization in space and time, together with its increase in material wealth and technical achievement, has undoubtedly led us away from our spiritual centre and has weakened or destroyed our sense of spiritual community. It would be foolish to underestimate the extent of this divorce of our modern civilization from its vital spiritual foundations. It is the malady of our age, and, as we see from its results in Germany, it may well be fatal to the society that gives way to it completely. But there is no reason to believe that the disease is irresistible or incurable. The deeper levels of human consciousness have not been lost by the changes of the last hundred years: they have only been obscured and overlaid by surface activities. The recovery of our civilization is therefore above all a question of restoring the balance between its inner and outer life. The unlimited material expansion of our civilization has weakened it by making it superficial, and the time had come for a movement in the reverse direction—a movement of concen-

tration to recover its inner strength and unity. No doubt it is extremely difficult to bring this need home to the average citizen who is immersed in the practical task of earning his living or in the specialized techniques of scientific organization; for in proportion as a culture becomes secularized it no longer possesses a common language to express its deepest needs. Thus if we state the need in the traditional religious language it is dismissed as pious platitudes or theological abstractions, while if we use the language of philosophy we address ourselves to a small minority that has little contact with the culture of modern mass society.

In the past the popular culture of both the English and American peoples was based on the Bible; that is to say, the greatest religious literature in the world was the common possession of the common people. God and the soul, salvation and damnation, the Word and the Spirit, were concepts which formed the background to the ordinary man's view of the world and of history. But today, when the cinema and the picture paper have taken the place of the Church and the Bible as the source of popular culture, it is obviously far more difficult to find a pathway from the surface world of specialized work and mechanized amusement to the deeper level of reality on which the life of our civilization depends.

At the present time, however, the situation has been profoundly changed by the impact of war. When our way of life has been suddenly interrupted, when our cinemas and shopping centres are being blasted by high explosives and the lights are out all over Europe, we are forced back on fundamentals whether we wish it or not. Is it possible that in this way war itself may become a way of spiritual renewal? In the past, only too often, war has been morally as well as physically destructive, like the Thirty Years War; and the pessimists who regard the two world wars as marking the decline of Western man and Western culture have a stronger case than most of us are prepared to admit. A great war always marks a turning-point—a judgement of the nations, as the Hebrew prophets called it—and as such it involves the possibility of creation as well as of destruction, the beginning of something new as well as the passing of what is old. Unless we believe in the possibility of the regeneration of Western culture there is no justification for our resistance to the blind will to power of German and Japanese militarism. Yet on the other hand it would be an equally great mistake to believe that a military victory and the economic replanning of the post-war world will solve our problems. The regeneration of Western civilization is a far bigger task than even the winning of the war,



and it demands a concentration of our spiritual energies and resources such as we can hardly conceive at present. The churches and the universities, which are the traditional guardians of these resources, have suffered—especially in the English speaking world—from the same tendency to extroversion and superficial activity which has been the general weakness of our age and our civilization.

The recovery of spiritual unity and the integration of life on the deeper level of consciousness cannot be achieved in a moment by a deliberate social act. That is why war and social revolution which yield quick results—of a kind—appeal more to human nature than the more fundamental process of social and spiritual renewal, the results of which are not immediately visible. Nevertheless it is no longer possible to regard this process of social regeneration as either impossible or unnecessary.

The old conventions regarding the limits of practical politics, and the relation of politics and business and of public and private interests, have been destroyed by the combined influence of totalitarianism and technocracy. The new techniques of mass power and social control cannot be abolished or forgotten, even if their misuse can be checked. We are faced with the choice between social regimentation and social regeneration, and if we do not possess the vision and the patience to realize the latter we shall inevitably be forced to adopt the former, in the same way as we have been forced to adopt the regimentation of total war in our opposition to the totalitarian state.

The continued existence of Western democracy depends on whether the democratic peoples are capable of dealing seriously and realistically with this fundamental issue. Social regeneration or spiritual renewal is not just a high-sounding phrase which can be left to preachers and moralists; it is the basic sociological problem of our time. For unless we find a way to restore the contact between the life of society and the life of the spirit our civilization will be destroyed by the forces which it has had the knowledge to create but not wisdom to control.

CHRISTOPHER DAWSON.

## THE OBEDIENCE OF A CHRISTIAN MAN

THE *Obedience of a Christian Man* was written by William Tyndale, better known as the translator of the New Testament into English and the protagonist of English Protestant reformers. It was published in 1528; and in 1928 Dr. Hensley Henson, preaching in the University church at Cambridge, began his sermon with these words: "Just four centuries have passed since Tyndale published the most famous of his works, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, a composition to which the historian of English religion will ascribe a critical importance."\* St. Thomas More, from the Catholic side, spoke of the book as one "whereby we be taught to disobey the doctrine of Christ's Catholic Church and set his holy sacraments at nought"†; but he admitted that its author, "before he gat himself to Luther in Germany", was well-known for a man of right good living, studious and well-learned in scripture, and in divers places in England was very much liked and did good with preaching.‡ It may be affirmed then, I think, that *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, whether in good repute or bad, stands as a sign in the way at one of the cross-roads of our national and religious history. One may go further and say, too, that it was a magazine from which subsequent reformers took most of their explosive and heretical doctrines.

It may be well, however, to remind ourselves of a simple fact that Tyndale's biographers seem hardly to have noticed—namely, that Tyndale himself was born of Catholic parents, was brought up in an English Catholic home, and in due time, and at his own desire, became a Catholic priest, the Catholic faith constituting, for all but the last twelve years of his life, a part of his very being.

His birthplace is a little uncertain. At one time he was thought to have belonged to a yeoman family living in the neighbourhood of Stinchcomb Hill in Gloucestershire, just below the western spur of the Cotswolds. But more recent research has led his latest biographer to conclude that his forebears lived not on the western but on the eastern side of the Severn. In either case the Tyndale Monument which commemorates his birth at North Nibley stands where it ought not. On Mr. Mozley's§ authority we may further presume that the year of his birth was 1491 or 1492, and not 1494, as previously held.

\* *The Church Times*, 3 February, 1928.

† More, *English Works, The Confutation of Tyndale*, p. 341 G.

‡ More, *Dialogue Concerning Tyndale*, bk. i, c. 1, p. 7.

§ J. F. Mozley, *William Tyndale* (1937), to whose generous and detailed correspondence I am indebted for these latest particulars.

From his own writings we gather some interesting self-evidence as to his appearance and disposition. "God hath made me," he says, "evil favoured in this world, and without grace in the sight of men." And this is borne out by the engraving reproduced as the frontispiece of Mr. Mozley's book. He further describes himself as "speechless and rude, dull and slow witted."\* Yet this diffident and self-belittling man was one "whose choice of words", as found in his own translation of the New Testament and as substantially surviving in the Authorized Version, "has for four hundred years exercised a supreme influence upon English prose."†

Foxe in his *Book of Martyrs* has told us all that is really known about his early life in a very few words:

Brought up from a child in the university of Oxford, where he by long continuance grew up and increased, as well in knowledge of tongues and other liberal arts, as especially in the knowledge of the scriptures, whereunto his mind was singularly addicted; insomuch that he, lying in Magdalen hall, read privily to certain students and fellows of Magdalen college some parcel of divinity, instructing them in the knowledge and truth of the scriptures. His manners and conversation, being correspondent to the same, were such that all they that knew him reputed and esteemed him to be a man of virtuous disposition and of life unspotted. Thus he in the university of Oxford increasing more and more in learning and proceeding in degrees of the schools, spying his time, removed thence to the university of Cambridge (1519); where he, after he had likewise made his abode a certain space (until 1521), being now farther ripened in the knowledge of God's word, leaving the university also, he resorted to on Master Welch, a knight of Gloucestershire (at Chipping Sodbury), and was there schoolmaster to his children.‡

What Foxe does not mention is that Tyndale was ordained priest about 1515, being then about twenty-three.

Even from the little Foxe tells us in this passage there can be no doubt as to his consuming interest in the scriptures. His ambition, so evidently, was not for place or power, but just to find means and conditions in which, unhampered, he could translate them into his mother tongue.

But when Foxe, in this same passage, writes of him as "being now farther ripened in the knowledge of God's word", as Mr. Mozley so delicately puts it, "we have reason to believe that he was ill at ease in the routine duties of the priesthood."§ The

\* "Tyndale, Letter to John Frith", Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Biography*, ii, p. 215.

† R. W. Chambers, *Man's Unconquerable Mind*, pp. 190-1.

‡ Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (1563). Quoted by Mozley, *William Tyndale*, p. 12.

§ Loc. cit., p. 25.

situation may be left to unfold itself in the quaint words of old Thomas Fuller, a great admirer of his. Tyndale, he says, "being schoolmaster to Mr. Welch, a bountiful housekeeper in Gloucestershire, to his house repaired many abbots of that county and clergymen, whom Tyndale so welcomed with his discourse against their superstitions, that afterwards they preferred to forbear Master Welch's good cheer rather than have the sour sauce therewith—Master Tyndale's company".\*

He further annoyed his fellow-priests in the diocese by local preaching of a kind that brought complaints about him to the ears of his vicar-general:

After that, when there was a sitting of the bishop's commissary or chancellor, and warning was given to the priests to appear, Master Tyndale was also warned to be there. . . . So he being there before them, they laid sore to his charge, saying he was an heretic in sophistry, an heretic in logic, and heretic in divinity, and so continueth. But they said unto him: You bear yourself boldly of the gentlemen here in this country, but you shall otherwise be talked with. Then Master Tyndale answered them: *I am content that you bring me where you will into any country within England, giving me ten pounds a year to live with, so you bind me to nothing, but to teach children and preach. Then they had nothing more to say to him, and thus he departed, and went home to his master again.*†

The words I have put into italics are to a Catholic, at any rate, of grave significance, for they can have but one meaning: Tyndale, a priest, no longer desired to say Mass.

So he returned to Chipping Sodbury, where, of course, if he wished, he could have said Mass in the chapel adjoining the Manor House, some remains of which are still to be seen. But he could not settle down again, being, as Foxe puts it, "so molested and vexed in the country by the priests, he was compelled to seek another place: and so coming to Sir John Welch . . . saying: 'Sir, I perceive I shall not be suffered to tarry long here in this country, neither shall you be able, though you would, to keep me out of the hands of the spirituality, and also what displeasure might grow thereby to you by keeping me, God knoweth: for the which I should be right sorry.' So that in fine, Master Tyndale, with the good will of his master, departed; and eftsoons came up to London, and there preached awhile according as he had done in the country before, and specially about the town of Bristow, and also in the said towne, in the common place called S. Austines Greene.

"At length he bethinking himself of Cuthbert Tunstal then bishop of London, and specially for the great commendation of Erasmus, who in his *Annotations* so extolleth him for his

\* Fuller, *Church History of Britain*, vol. ii, p. 102.

† Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (1563), pp. 29-30.



learning, thus cast within himself, that if he might attain unto his service he was a happy man. . . . But God, who secretly disposeth the course of things, sawe that that was not best for Tyndale's purpose, nor for the profit of his soul; and therefore gave him to find little favour in the bishop's sight. The answer of whom was this, that his house was full. . . . And so he remained in London the space of almost a year, beholding and marking with himselfe the course of the world, and especially the demeanour of the preachers, how they boasted themselves and set up their authoritie and kingdom; beholding also the pompe of the prelates, with other things which greatlie misliked him: insomuch that he understood, not only there to be no room in the bishops house for him to translate the new testament: but also that there was no place to do it in all England. And therefore finding no place for his purpose within the realme, and having some aid and provision by Gods providence ministered unto him by Humphrey Monmouth (a great merchant of London) and certain other good men, he took his leave of the realme and departed into Germany."\*

The rebuff then suffered by Tyndale shattered, for the time being, his dearest hopes; nor could he forget or forgive it, and writing six or seven years later in his *Practice of Prelates* he could find nothing better to call Bishop Tunstal than "that still Saturn, the imager of all mischief":†

He arrived at Hamburg in the spring of 1524 and went on to Wittenberg, where Luther was then living, remaining there for nine or ten months and spending his time in the preparation of his English New Testament. This, the most important of all his literary undertakings, reached our shores in the spring of 1526, and in spite of some opinions to the contrary was soon and widely distributed throughout the country, getting into the hands not only of the few well-educated but also into those of many who could only just manage to read it. In the latter part of the same year his introduction to the Epistle to the Romans came out, of which only one copy now survives; and in 1527, the year following, we have the *Parable of the Wicked Mammon*, or, as Tyndale calls it elsewhere, "my book of the Justifying of Faith", and a recent writer, "a terrific indictment of Catholicism".

And then follows, in 1528, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*; and we learn on seemingly trustworthy evidence how it got into the hands of Henry VIII.‡

\* Foxe, Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Biography*, vol. ii, pp. 192-4.

† Tyndale's *Expositions* (Parker Society), p. 321.

‡ Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, vol. i, p. 112.

Upon the lady Anne Boleyn waited a fair young gentlewoman, named Mistress Gainsford; and in her service also was retained Mr. George Zouch. This gentleman of a comely sweet person, a Zouch indeed, was a suitor in way of marriage to the said young lady: and among other love tricks once he plucked from her a book in English, called Tyndale's *Obedience*, which the lady Anne lent her to read. About this time the Cardinal (Wolsey) had given commandment to the prelates, and especially Dr. Sampson, dean of the King's chapel, that they come not abroad; that so much as might be, they might not come to the King's reading. But this which he most feared fell out upon this occasion. For Mr. Zouch (I use the words of the MS.) was so ravished with the spirit of God speaking now as well in the heart of the reader, as first it did in the heart of the maker of the book, that he was never well but when he was reading of that book. Mistress Gainsford wept because she could not get the book from her lover; and he was as ready to weep to deliver it. But see the providence of God! Mr. Zouch standing in the chapel before Dr. Sampson, ever reading upon this book, and the dean never having his eye off the book in the gentleman's hands, called him to him, and then snatched the book out of his hand, asked his name, and whose man he was. And the book he delivered up to the Cardinal.

In the meantime the lady Anne shewed herself not sorry nor angry with either of the two. But said she, "Well, it shall be the dearest book that ever the dean, or Cardinal, took away."

The noble woman goes to the King, and upon her knees she desireth the King's help for the book. Upon the King's token the book was restored. And now bringing the book to him, she besought his Grace, most tenderly to read it. The King did so, and delighted in the book. "*For,*" saith he, "*this book is for me and all kings to read.*"

This saying of Henry VIII's which I have italicized reminds us of another spoken by St. Thomas More to Thomas Cromwell one day at Chelsea.

"Master Cromwell, you are now entered into the service of a most noble, wise and liberal prince: if you will follow my poor advice, you shall in your counsel-giving unto his Grace, ever tell him what he ought to do, but never what he is able to do . . . For if a lion knew his own strength, hard it were for any man to rule him."\*

Tyndale's little treatise on obedience told the lion the secret of his own strength; and, alas, incontinently, he proceeded to act upon his knowledge. For as Stubbs puts it in another way, not only did Henry VIII, in the exercise of his power, wish to be the king, the whole king, and nothing but the king, but with regard to the Church in England, "he wished to be the pope, the whole pope, and something more than the pope".†

It may therefore be of interest to trace out from the *Obedience* itself the plan or blue-print of what was already shaping itself in the mind of the King, not forgetting, however, that there was

\* Roper, *Life of More*, pp. 56-7.

† Stubbs, *Essays on Mediaeval and Modern History*, p. 301.

also a good deal in the book not at all accordant with the royal mind.

It is true that Henry VIII had quarrelled with the Pope; but in his inmost mind he seems not to have quarrelled with the Catholic religion; and he assured himself that with him as Supreme Head it would go on in England much as before, and perhaps even better than before.\* It may fairly be said that in his own estimation he was never a Protestant; and in his will, dated only a month before his death, he directs that after his demise his body shall be removed to "his college at Windsor, and the service of *Placebo* and *Dirige*, with a sermon and Mass on the morrow . . . devoutly to be done and solemnly kept".†

In writing his book of *Obedience*, Tyndale went all the way with Henry VIII in so far as he wished to transfer the spiritual obedience of Englishmen from the Pope to the King. But he went much further than Henry VIII in wishing to discredit and finally to destroy the practice of the Catholic religion throughout the country. And this will become only too evident as we follow the course of his thought through *The Obedience of a Christian Man*.

In his preface he attempts to encourage those who are prevented from reading "the word of their souls' health"; and in the prologue he indicates his attitude towards the spiritual powers that be: "Forasmuch as our holy prelates and our ghostly religious (that is the monks and the friars) which ought to defend God's word, speak evil of it . . . therefore have I made this little treatise that followeth."‡

Tyndale first describes the nature and necessity of obedience on the part of children to their parents, of wives to their husbands, and of servants to their masters. Then he comes to consider obedience in its principal exercise—namely, that unto kings, princes and rulers.

"There is no power but of God'; by power understand the authority of kings and princes. 'The powers that be are ordained of God'; yea, though he be pope, bishop, monk or friar. 'They that resist shall receive unto themselves damnation.' Why? For God's word is against them, which will have all men under the power of the temporal sword. . . . With good living ought the spirituality to rid themselves from the fear of the temporal sword; and not with craft, and with blinding the kings, and bringing the vengeance of God upon them, and in purchasing license to sin unpunished.

\* But see also Froude, *History of England*, vol. iv, p. 212, seemingly on Foxe's authority.

† *Ibid.*, p. 233.

‡ Tyndale, *Doctrinal Treatises*, p. 163 (Parker Society).



"Furthermore thou he (the king) be the greatest tyrant in the world, yet is he unto thee a great benefit of God, and a thing wherefore thou oughtest to thank God highly."

It is not surprising then when Henry VIII read *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, especially at the time of his quarrel with the Pope, that he found in it some very comfortable doctrine, doctrine too that he was only too ready to put into execution.

In another section Tyndale supports his stark theory of an absolute royal power by saying that the law was given as a witness against sin and to express God's abhorrence of it. "Governors are ordained of God. If they are evil, it is because of our sins, and a sign of God's anger. . . . Resistance to evil rulers only deepens the bondage of sin; submission will lead God to deliver his children . . . A Christian man in respect of God is but a passive thing."

"Christ saith unto Peter, 'Put up thy sword into his sheath; for all that lay hand upon the sword shall perish with the sword'; that is, whosoever without the commandment of the temporal officer, to whom God hath given the sword, layeth hand on the sword to take vengeance, the same deserveth death in the deed-doing. God did not put Peter only under the temporal sword, but also Christ himself . . . If then the head be under the temporal sword, how can the members be excepted?""

Again Tyndale justifies kingly tyranny by saying, "If thy rulers were always kind, thou shouldst not know whether thine obedience were pure or no; but if thou canst patiently obey evil rulers in all thing that is not to the dishonour of God, and when thou hurtest not thy neighbours, then art thou sure that God's Spirit worketh in thee, and that thy faith is no dream, nor any false imagination."

Then comes a general counsel that all may try to follow: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but give room unto the wrath of God: for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord. Therefore if thy enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink; for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head'; that is, thou shalt kindle love in him. 'Be not overcome of evil'; that is, let not another man's wickedness make thee wicked also, 'but overcome evil with good'; that is, with softness, kindness, and all patience win him, even as God with kindness won thee."†

But a few lines later he returns to his constantly recurring theme: "As the law is a terrible thing, even so is the king: for he is ordained to take vengeance, and hath a sword, and not peacock feathers [as the pope hath]. Fear him, therefore, as

\* P. 188.

† Pp. 193-4.

thou wouldst look on a sharp sword that hanged over thy head by a hair."\*

Tyndale, indeed, here gives voice to a sentiment that must have been very widespread in England at that time.

"Evil rulers then are a sign that God is angry and wroth with us. Is it not a great wrath and vengeance, that the father and mother should hate their children, even their flesh and their blood? or that an husband should be unkind unto his wife, or a master unto the servant that waiteth on his profit? or that lords and kings should be tyrants unto their subjects and tenants, which pay them tribute, toll, custom, and rent, labouring and toiling to find them in honour, and to maintain them in their estate? Is this not a fearful judgment of God, and a cruel wrath, that the very prelates and shepherds of our souls which were wont to feed Christ's flock with Christ's doctrine, and to walk before them in living thereafter, and to give their lives for them, to their ensample and edifying, and to strengthen their weak faiths, are now sore changed, that if they smell that one of their flock do but once long or desire for the true knowledge of Christ, they will slay him, burning him with fire most cruelly? What is the cause of this . . . Verily it is the hand of God to avenge the wickedness of them that have no love or lust unto the truth of God when it is preached. . . ."

†

"Let us receive all things of God, whether it be good or bad: let us humble ourselves under his mighty hand, and submit ourselves unto his nurture and chastising, and not withdraw ourselves from his correction. Read Hebrews xii for they comfort; and let us not take the staff by the end, or seek to avenge ourselves on his rod, which is the evil rulers. . . ."

‡

"Whensoever the children of Israel fell from the way which God had commanded them to walk in, he gave them up under one tyrant or another. As soon as they came to the knowledge of themselves, and repented, crying for mercy, and leaning unto the truth of his promises, he sent one to deliver them, as the histories of the bible make mention."§

"A Christian man, in respect of God, is but a passive thing; a thing that suffereth only, and doth nought; as the sick, in respect of the surgeon or physician, doth but suffer only. . . . Now if the sick resist the razor, the searching iron, and so forth, doth he not resist his own health, and is cause of his own death? So likewise is it of us, if we resist evil rulers, which are the rod and scourge wherewith God chastiseth us; the instruments wherewith God searcheth our wounds; and bitter drinks to drive out

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\* Pp. 193-4.

† P. 195.

‡ P. 196.

§ P. 197.

sin and to make it appear, and caustics to draw out by the roots the core of the pocks of the soul that fretteth inward."\*

Then follows a sentiment that Tyndale is never tired of repeating, that adversity in every form does but show, utter forth, and exhibit secret and inward sin, and that in order that he may recognize and conquer it: "A Christian man knoweth every thing how to live yet is the flesh so weak, that he can never take up his cross himself, to kill and mortify the flesh; he must have another to lay it on his back."†

He concludes this section by saying that as he had described the obedience of them that are under power and rule, even so, in what follows, he will declare how the rulers themselves, which God shall vouchsafe to call unto the knowledge of the truth, ought to rule.

Tyndale strikes the right note in his first instruction to kings. "The most despised person in his realm is the king's brother: fellow-member with him in the kingdom of God and of Christ. Let him therefore not think himself too good to do them service; neither seek any other thing in them than a father seeketh in his children, yea, than Christ sought in us. Though the king, in temporal regiment, be in the room of God, and representeth God himself, and is without comparison better than his subjects; yet let him put off that, and become a brother, doing and leaving undone all things in respect of his commonwealth, that all men may see that he seeketh nothing but the profit of his subjects."‡

He is not afraid to bring his teaching home to his own king's mind by warning him, in the words of Moses, not to have too many wives, lest his heart be turned away; for women (and pride) are the common pestilence of all princes. "Read the stories and see."§

He then exhorts them "to rule their realms with the help of lay-men that are sage, wise, learned, and expert. Is it not a shame above all shames and a monstrous thing, that no man should be found able to govern a worldly kingdom save bishops and prelates; that have forsaken the world, and are taken out of the world, and appointed to preach the kingdom of God? . . . To preach God's word is too much for half a man; to minister a temporal kingdom is too much for half a man also. Either requireth an whole man. One therefore cannot well do both."||

This good counsel may have had some effect; for More was made Chancellor at the end of the following year.

Tyndale uses an effective argument against the exercise of secular power by the spirituality. "One cannot do both," he

\* Ibid. † P. 198.

‡ Pp. 202-3.

§ P. 204.

|| P. 206-7.

says. "He that avengeth himself on every trifle is not meet to preach the patience of Christ, how that a man ought to forgive and suffer all things. He that is overwhelmed with all manner of riches, and doth seek more, daily, is not meet to preach poverty. He that will obey no man is not meet to preach how we ought to obey all men. Peter saith, Acts vi, 'It is not meet that we [the spirituality] should leave [preaching] the word of God, and serve tables.' Paul saith in the ixth chapter of first Corinth, 'Woe is me if I preach not'. A terrible saying, verily, for popes, cardinals, and bishops! If he had said, 'Woe be unto me if I fight not and move princes to war, or if I increase not St. Peter's patrimony', as they call it, it had been a more easy saying for them."\* And then for many wearisome pages he inveighs against St. John Fisher.

"Mark, I pray you, what an orator he is . . . Martin Luther hath burned the pope's decretals; a manifest sign, saith he, that he would have burned the pope's holiness also, if he had had him! A like argument, which I suppose to be rather true, I make: Rochester and his holy brethren have burnt Christ's testament; an evident sighn, verily, that they would have burnt Christ himself also, if they had had him!"†

Finally, he writes, "I had almost verily left out the chiefest point of all. . . . Rochester will have love to go before, and faith to spring out of love. Thus antichrist turneth the root of the tree upwards. I must first love a bitter medicine (after Rochester's doctrine), and then believe that it is wholesome, and that the bitterness shall heal me: when, by natural reason, I first hate a bitter medicine until I am brought in belief that it is wholesome, and that the bitterness shall heal me; and then afterward love it, of that belief. Doth the child love the father first, and then believe that he is son or heir? or rather, because he knoweth that he is his son or heir and beloved, therefore loveth again? . . . Because we are sons, therefore love we. Now by faith we are sons, therefore love we, as John saith in the first chapter of his gospel: 'He gave them power to be the sons of God, in that they believed they believed on his name.' We are all sons of God by the faith which is in Jesus Christ."‡

"See in my book of the Justifying of Faith [The parable of the Wicked Mammon] and there shalt thou see all thing abundantly how faith justifieth before God in the heart; and how love springeth of faith and compelleth us to work; and how the works *justify before the world* [but not before God], and testify what we are, and certify us that our faith is unfeigned, and that the right Spirit of God is in us."§

\* P. 222.

† P. 223.

‡ P. 222.

§ P. 223.



"Wicked sinner have no faith. It is another thing to believe that the king is rich, and that he is rich unto me, and that my part is therein; and that he will not spare a penny of his riches at my need, When I believe that the king is rich, I am not moved; but when I believe that he is rich for me, and that he will never fail me at my need, then love I; and of love am ready to work unto the uttermost of my power."\*

"But let us return at the last unto our purpose again. *What is the cause that laymen cannot now rule*, as well as in times past, and as the Turks yet do? Verily because that antichrist [the pope] with the mist of his juggling hath beguiled our eyes . . . and hath taught christian men to dread not God and his word, but himself and his word, not God's law and ordinances, princes and officers which God hath set to rule the world, but his own law and ordinances, traditions and ceremonies, and disguised disciples."†

After this Tyndale begins his attack upon the Mass, and carries not his criticism but rather his mockery beyond all bounds.

"What helpeth it also that the priest, when he goeth to mass, disguiseth himself with a great part of the passion of Christ, and playeth out the rest under silence, with signs and proffers, with nodding, becking and mowing, as it were jackanapes, when neither he himself, neither any man else wotteth what he meaneth?"

That Tyndale's mockery of the holy action of the Mass effected what he wished may be seen from the list of "Articles to be followed and observed, according to the injunctions" of Edward VI, in 1549, the second of which enjoins, "That no minister do counterfeit the popish mass, as to kiss the Lord's table; washing his fingers at every time in the communion; blessing his eyes with the paten, or crossing his head with the paten; shifting of the book from one place to another; laying down and licking the chalice of the communion; holding up his fingers, hands or thumbs, joined towards his temples; breathing upon the bread, etc."

We see too, how, with this charge of "disguise", Tyndale at a stroke does away with all vestments used in the Holy Sacrifice or at other times.

"God anointed his son Jesus with the Holy Ghost, and therefore called him Christ; which is as much as to say as anointed. Outwardly he disguised him not; but made him like other men, and sent him into the world to bless us, and offer himself for us a sacrifice of a sweet savour. . . ."

\* P. 224.

† P. 224.

"Whosoever goeth about to make satisfaction for his sins to Godward, saying in his heart, This much have I sinned, this much will I do again; or this-wise will I live to make amends withal; or this will I do, to get heaven withal; the same is an infidel, faithless and damned in his deed-doing, and hath lost his part in Christ's blood."\*

At the conclusion of this section, Tyndale describes the clergy as "unlearned in the secrets of the faith", men at once "stubborn and headstrong, and who set not a little by themselves. But, alas, we have about 20,000 of them that know no more scripture than is written in their portesses (breviaries); and among them he is exceedingly well learned that can turn to his service": that is, find his place easily.†

There seems little doubt but that Tyndale, had he lived in our day, would have been called distinctly low-church, for anything in the practice and ceremonial of the Catholic Church, which for centuries had given it its character of beauty, gravity, decorum and devotion, was to him anathema.‡ And what added to his anger was that so many of these things were connected with offerings from the faithful. Nothing, he says, can be done but that the laity must pay for it. "They (the clergy) will lose nothing. Why? It is God's; it is not theirs. It is St. Hubert's rents, St. Alban's lands, St. Edmund's right, St. Peter's patrimony, say they, and none of ours." Much they get for so little pains-taking on their part—"offering at weddings, offering at buryings, offering to images, offering of wax lights and candles. . . . Then brotherhoods and pardoners. What get they also by confessions? Yea, and many enjoin penance, to give a certain [sum] for to have so many masses said, and desire to provide a chaplain themselves; soul-masses, dirges, month-minds, year-minds, All-souls day and trentals. The mother church and the high altar must have something in every testament. Offerings at priest's first masses . . . the hallowing, or rather conjuring of churches, chapels, altars, super-altars, chalice, vestments, copes, altar-cloths, surplices, towels, basins, ewers, ships (incense-boats), censer, and all manner of ornament, must be found them freely; they will not give a mite thereunto. Last of all, what swarms of begging friars are there! The parson sheareth, the

\* It was this passage, Foxe supposes, that the commissioners appointed to examine his works (of whom More was one) had in mind when they reported that he had said, "We are bound to make satisfaction to our neighbour but not to God." (p. 228 and note).

† P. 229.

‡ "Is not that shepherd's hook, the bishop's cross, a false sign? Is not that white rochet? . . . What other things are their sandals, gloves, mitres, and all the whole pomp of their disguising, than false signs in which Paul prophesied they should come?" (p. 252).

vicar shaveth, the parish priest polleth, the friar scrapeth, and the pardoner pareth; we lack but a butcher to pull off the skin."

"What other things are these in a realm save horse-leeches, and even very maggots, cankers, and catapillars, which devour no more but all that is green; and those wolves which Paul prophesied should come in lamb's skins; and bade us beware of them, and judge them by their works."\*

Then comes a final counsel unmistakably directed to the King himself: "The kings ought, I say, to remember that they are in God's stead, and ordained of God, not for themselves, but for the wealth of their subjects. Let them remember that their subjects are their brethren, their flesh and blood, members of their own body; and even their ownselves in Christ. *Therefore* ought they to pity them, and to rid them from such wily (priestly) tyranny, which increaseth more and more daily."†

And so we may leave this book of "obedience" which has taught disobedience to so many, so opposed as it is to what Tyndale is pleased to call "pope-holiness" and so favourable to what, on the contrary, we may call king-holiness, the king in question being Henry VIII.

W. E. CAMPBELL.

## THE SOVIET CONCORDAT

### I

**I**N the autumn of 1943 a new phase opened in the relations between Church and State in Russia. The Metropolitan Sergei, head of the Orthodox Church, went to the Kremlin. He was received by Stalin, to whom he expressed the loyalty and fidelity of his Church to the Soviet Union. Shortly afterwards a synod of bishops proclaimed Sergei Patriarch. Thus they renewed the ancient tradition of the Orthodox Church which had been broken by Peter the Great, renewed for a brief period under Kerensky's provisional government, and to all intents and purposes abolished by the Soviets a few years later. The visit and the synod's proclamation were the outer signs of the inner accord. We still do not know its clauses—or rather its details.

\* Pp. 237-9.

† Pp. 239-40.



But it is quite obvious that the relations between Church and State have changed.

Anti-religious propaganda has come to an end. The destruction of Russian churches in occupied territory has excited protests no less violent than those raised by the Basques against Franco after Guernica or by the Poles when Hitler violated the Polish churches. In Russian films we can now see old peasant women making a great sign of the cross on the foreheads of their sons leaving for the war. These scenes have not been suppressed as they certainly would have been as recently as the war against Finland in 1939 and 1940.

The relations of Church and State in Russia present a number of interesting points. There is the general question of peace established between the two after a revolution. There is the quite particular interest of the situation in Russia. Then it should not be forgotten that it is precisely a Socialist, or rather a Marxist, revolution that is coming to terms with a religious communion. And, of course, there is also the question whether the agreement will last. The Soviets have, after all, made many temporary concessions under pressure of circumstance. Time and time again they have drawn back, whether it was N.E.P., collectivization or the peasants. Is this a change which will see no tomorrow and will hardly survive the war? Or, on the contrary, will this change have profound historical consequences? Is it an armistice? Or is it peace?

## II

To answer this question we must first examine the reasons which led the State to combat the Church during the revolution and after the establishment of the Soviet regime. They are obvious enough—first of all, the teachings of Marx on religion in general and the churches in particular. But quite apart from this, the role played by the Orthodox Church in Russia before, during and after the revolution played an important part. It was bound to the *ancien régime* by too many historical, political and economic ties, all of them centuries old. Even the France of Louis XV or the Spain of Alphonso XIII were nothing in comparison. The revolutionary movement in Russia came up against the Church and the clergy throughout the nineteenth century. Tolstoi was duly excommunicated by the Church, and even the agrarian reforms introduced by a reactionary minister like Stolypine were opposed by the clergy.

The same was true of the Revolution itself. The great

mass of the clergy remained faithful to the *ancien régime*. The Soviet Government saw in it a powerful organization always ready to support a possible restoration. Thus it treated the Church with the full rigour of the anti-religious Marxist analysis. If one adds that this suppression took place in a country where traditionally all suppressions have been on a particularly brutal scale, one can understand that the situation of the Orthodox Church in Russia after the revolution was entirely without precedent.

The years passed. In Russia the number of churches that remained open could be reckoned in tens; the same was true of the priests, at least of those who exercised their ministry legally. A generation grew up to power without any idea of church or religion, certainly with no favourable idea. Behind them, yet another generation was growing up with even less contact. This must have been the verdict of an impartial observer five years ago. What was less noticeable was the fact that the old hatred of the *ancien régime* was retreating into the haze of memory. The Soviet regime felt much stronger, less menaced, more certain of its future. With tanks and aeroplanes and the mass organization of its youth, it had little to fear from the melancholy ruins of the ancient church. Its real troubles were coming from party heretics.

At the same time, Marxist thought developed on new lines. People got used to the idea that Marx, Engels and even Lenin could be manipulated at will by a subtle though official use of the "party line". And obviously once it was admitted that Marxism was not rigid and could be modified, not only certain branches of thought and action, but the totality of human life were certain to be affected. The Soviets were still far from modifying their controlled Marxism in relation to the Church; but they were on their way.

The Moscow trials and the purge of the Soviet "Old Guard" also influenced the relations of Church and State. The old Bolsheviks had kept their belief in pure Marxism. They had the most lively memory of the reactionary character of the Orthodox Church. With each purge it was not only the enemies of the Stalinist dictatorship who disappeared. It was also by chance and coincidence—the enemies of the Orthodox Church. For those who took their place, all the old stories of churches, priests, archimandrites, of Gapons and Pobedonostzevs were only vague historical memories.

## III

The war came. It menaced the very existence of the Soviet State. Russia passed through a terrible and prolonged crisis. It lived through attempts to use against it organizations existing within its own jurisdiction—counter-revolutionary movements backed by the Germans in Lithuania, Esthonia and Latvia, mass defections among the peasantry in Poland, disillusioned by two years of Soviet occupation. But the Church did not allow itself to be exploited. Hitler posed in vain as Defender of the Faith and Protector of the Orthodox Church. The attempt failed. At the same time, throughout Russia, the bishops of the persecuted Church prayed for the victory of the State which oppressed them.

Wars develop religious feeling. Russia has proved no exception. The soldiers who left for the front with their mothers' crosses signed on their foreheads did not make worse soldiers on that account. In moments of peril they remembered the prayers they used to say with their parents in the country. They did not fight less valiantly for that. One thing was clear. The attitude of the Church and of the faithful was beyond reproach. A possible enemy of the Soviet State had vanished. A possible ally had appeared.

The war did not only arouse religious emotions. There was a resurgence of nationalism. From the first, the war was declared to be a national war and every month emphasized the patriotic aspect. The Russians turned again to their history. For twenty years it had been forbidden territory. Marxism had taught history as the struggle of classes. All the cumbersome rubbish of heroes, kings and warriors had been swept from its pages. The sinister vested interests beneath national and religious struggles had been revealed—economic interests behind the Crusades, class interests behind Joan of Arc. Now, however, everything returned. Fighting the Germans, the Russians remembered that Alexander Nevsky, a Russian prince of the Middle Ages, had routed the Teutons on a frozen lake in the North. When the German advance threatened Moscow, they recalled the glorious days of Kutuzov, Rostopschin and Bagration, who fought against Napoleon. In the heart of the catastrophe, in the heat of the battle, the great phantoms of history were reborn. To them were consecrated books, broadcasts, divisions, proclamations, even decorations. Russia's history returned to Russia's people. But Russian history is not only Suvorov and Kutuzov. It is not only Minine and Alexander

Nevsky. It is also the Orthodox Church. In few countries is the nation's history as closely identified with its Church as in Russia. Those who in Russia say "return to history" say implicitly "return to the Church"—even if they do not yet say "return to religion".

#### IV

Thus, is it not really very obvious why the Soviet State should, once the war is done, renounce its agreement with the Church? The Church has ceased to be an instrument of counter-revolution. The old anti-clerical prejudices have vanished with time—and the purges. The new generation, proven in the fire of battle, is primarily nationalist, proud of the great things of its own past and respectful of the institutions which played in these so great a part. These are the factors which can stabilize the concordat of 1943 and even widen or deepen it. For the needs of the Church in Russia are simply gigantic. It has no seminaries for its priests. It has almost no religious publications. It lacks everything. It can rise again only at the expense of a major effort.

One question remains to be answered. Is the Concordat a unique privilege for the Orthodox Church, or does it entail a change in the position of all the other cults and communions in Russia?

The Catholics, the Orthodox sects and, most numerous of all, the Moslems of Central Asia, all have religious aspirations fully as legitimate as those of the Orthodox Church. This may prove the most complicated of all the future problems raised by the Concordat.

KSAWERY PRUSZYNSKI.

## ERNST TROELTSCH'S CONCEPTION OF HISTORY

### I

THE German thinker Ernst Troeltsch,\* the twentieth anniversary of whose death occurred last February, did some of his best work in the field of history, although he was

\*Abbreviations used for Troeltsch's works:

S.T. = *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* (1912; Eng. trans., 1931).

H. = *Der Historismus und seine Probleme* (1922).

C.T. = *Christian Thought, its History and Application* (ed. von Hugel, 1923).

G.A. = *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Geistesgeschichte und Religionssoziologie* (1925).



successively Professor of Theology in Heidelberg and Professor of Philosophy in Berlin. This clearly reflects the main tension in his spiritual life; on the one hand he felt it necessary to strive towards ultimate, objective, binding truth with the help of theology and philosophy, on the other hand he was drawn to the infinite variety of historical phenomena which seems so difficult to reconcile with objective truth. His problem was "the relation between the endless movement of the stream of historical life and the need of the human mind to limit and to shape it by means of fixed standards" (*C.T.*, 39), the relation between the ever-changing and the fundamentally unchangeable. There was evidently a close connection in Troeltsch's mind between religious and historical problems, and it is because of this that we must first describe some of his religious views before we can approach his conception of history.

As a theologian he could not shirk the disturbing question whether, in view of the apparent diversity of man's religious beliefs, Christianity could be considered to have an absolute validity. He felt bound to reject Hegel's view of the natural upward trend of religious development towards Christianity, based on the common character of all religions. There is, he maintained, "a sharp distinction between the great world religions and the national religions of heathen tribes, and . . . further [there are] certain irresolvable contradictions between these world religions themselves, which render their ultimate fusion and reconciliation in Christianity highly improbable, either in theory or in practice". (*C.T.*, 13.)

Troeltsch suggested the following solution of this problem. "It is quite possible," he wrote, "that there is an element of truth in every religion, but that this is combined with innumerable transitory individual features . . . [Various] racial groups, living under entirely different cultural conditions, may experience their contact with the Divine Life in quite a different way. . . . If we wish to determine their relative value, it is not the religions alone that we must compare, but always only the civilizations of which the religion in each case constitutes a part incapable of severance from the rest. But who will presume to make a really final pronouncement here? Only God Himself, who has determined these differences, can do that." (*C.T.*, 16, 26, 27.) Yet Troeltsch added immediately: "A truth which . . . is a truth for us does not cease because of this to be very Truth and Life." (*C.T.*, 34.) With this theory of polymorphous truth Troeltsch was consciously reviving an old undercurrent of Protestant thought, going back to certain religious writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries whom Troeltsch called

"Spiritual Reformers". Among them he counted Karlstadt, Schwenkfeld, Sebastian Franck, Castellio, and some less-known Dutch and English mystics. Here is a typical passage by John Saltmarsh, the seventeenth-century English divine, of whose works Troeltsch was particularly fond: "Every beam of light is light; every truth is a sparkle of truth itself . . . They who break a Chrystall, may see their face in every peece and parcell: so in everything of Christ there is an image of Christ . . . Our severall and distinct goings are but like so many Travellers to the City of London; some travell from the north, some from the south, and from the west, some from the east, yet all thither"\* It must be emphasized that while most of these Spiritual Reformers were insisting on complete toleration of all beliefs because of the diversity of truth, they themselves were fully convinced of the truth of their own beliefs and very far from being sceptics.

Troeltsch adopted this theory of truth, but gave it a new turn by linking it with his conception of history. In his opinion the study of history had an eminently practical function: it helped us to know ourselves. He believed with Goethe that in order to know who we really are we must be able to give an account of almost three thousand years. But if history was to be an aid to self-knowledge it could no longer be world history, for he felt bound to conclude from his religious enquiries that "mankind as a whole has no spiritual unity and therefore no uniform development. All theories about such a common human-development are metaphysical fairy-tales about a non-existing object." (*H.*, 707.) We had to be content therefore with the history of Europe, of the "West". Now Christianity was the European religion and had been welded by "historical facts . . . into the closest connection with the civilizations of Greece, Rome, and northern Europe". It therefore "stands or falls with European civilization. . . . Its primary claim to validity is thus the fact that only through it have we become what we are, and that only in it can we preserve the religious forces that we need . . . We cannot live without a religion, yet the only religion that we can endure is Christianity, for Christianity has grown up with us and has become a part of our very being." (*C.T.*, 25). For this reason Troeltsch censures severely all attempts at introducing Eastern religions into Europe as an irresponsible game ("Spielerei": *H.*, 165). He insists, however, on Christianity being "a manifestation of the Divine Life itself . . . It is God's countenance as revealed to us . . . It is final and unconditional for us, because we have nothing else, and because in what we have we can recognize the accents of the Divine

\* John Saltmarsh, *Smoke in the Temple*, 1646, 70; Preface.

Voice." (C.T., 26.) This attitude is evidently far removed from any sceptical relativism, so that Troeltsch could say of himself at the end of his life: "I have, in this respect, become more and more radical and super-denominational, whilst, at the same time, I have come more and more to regard the specific kernel of religion as a unique and independent source of life and power." (C.T., 31.) This relative conception of truth enabled him also to be extremely fair to the various churches and sects he was dealing with in his historical masterpiece "The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches". His views may perhaps be compared to those of another great German thinker, Lessing, as expressed in his famous parable of the three rings. There, too, the three rings are equally valid and binding for their respective possessors, and only God will be able to decide at the end of time whether any of them was superior to the others. At the same time, faith in one's own aspect of truth is possible and, indeed, necessary for salvation. This Troeltsch, who was and remained a Lutheran himself, believed to be the most general and profoundest meaning of the Protestant doctrine of Justification by Faith. (H., 185.) It is an implication of this theory (pointed out by Troeltsch himself) that, in territories dominated by the great world religions, Christianity should only maintain a "dialogue" in the spirit of mutual tolerance and should avoid any missionary activity.

A critical estimate of Troeltsch's argument for the validity of Christianity, and of his philosophical theory underlying it, lies outside the scope of this essay. Troeltsch's religious views are, however, relevant in this context, for he was faced with exactly the same problem as soon as he went outside the field of religious history and began to deal with historical problems in general. In view of the bewildering variety of historical ideals and standards, where could one find ideals and standards of absolute validity? His answer was: one cannot. And this he found true not only in comparing different civilizations, but also in dealing with various phases of our own history. There are, he admitted, certain common elements running through the whole history of our civilization, but these were represented at various times in different proportions. Each successive period of history, on the other hand, introduced new elements, was faced with profoundly different problems, and found a solution of its own. Here, too, Troeltsch advocated relativism. There were no eternal, unchangeable standards, not even within one civilization, nor could he discover in European history something like the gradual unfolding of Hegel's world-spirit. To understand an epoch meant to measure it according to its own



standards and ideals. He agreed with Ranke that each period of history "stands in direct relation to God" ("*unmittelbar zu Gott*"); the various solutions which were valid only at the time all partake of the Absolute which Troeltsch believed to be unknowable in itself. But this direct relation to the Absolute enabled him to reject the sceptical consequences of relativism. In analysing former periods of history he dealt with ideals and standards which were able, more or less comprehensively, to achieve a temporary cultural synthesis. This synthesis has to be accepted as valid for that place and time. But what we concede in that way to other periods we are surely justified in conceding to our own time. For us, too, there can be a relatively valid cultural synthesis, although such a solution, he pointed out, "is not an *a priori* construction which can start from the essential nature of Reason or the law of the world process. It is rather an *a posteriori* construction which essentially demands a knowledge of the premises, history, and destiny of . . . [a] particular sphere of culture". (C.T., 96.) Troeltsch reminded his readers of Goethe's saying: "We can only get to know ourselves by actions. Try to do your duty, and you will soon discover who you are. But what is your duty? To fulfil the demands of the day." Troeltsch was, of course, well aware that a possibility of achieving a new cultural synthesis cannot be proved; it can only be brought about by those who believe in it. Whether Spengler is right in forecasting the "Decline of the West", or whether something new can be achieved, depends on our actions based on our faith, but such a faith is, at least, not inconsistent with Troeltsch's relativism. To him our foremost task was the achievement of such a cultural synthesis, and history, as an aid to self-knowledge, could help us. Accurate self-knowledge enabled us to distinguish those future possibilities which were in keeping with our traditions from others which were foreign to our very nature. It is clear, then, that an accurate knowledge of our past was among the indispensable safeguards of a desirable future.

At this point it becomes necessary to explain that Troeltsch's historical work remained *a troso* because of his untimely death (which was probably caused by the miseries of the German inflation). The actual European "*Geistesgeschichte*" which he had planned to write remains unwritten. We have only fragments of his thought on these subjects in some of his earlier articles and reviews, and in the last chapter of *Historismus* which contains a general plan of what was to come. In describing Troeltsch's picture of European history, as far as we can piece it together, we must bear this in mind.

## II

A history of this kind would, of course, not include an account of the whole past, even if this were possible, but only of those elements which have become essential parts of our existence. This involves an organization of the past into successive periods each of which contributed some new elements to the European structure. Troeltsch had to ask himself two questions in this connection. First: Is it possible to arrive at an objective periodization, and then: Is there an objective method for finding those essential elements of the past? He believed that the progress of historical research was bringing us steadily nearer to an objective periodization as witnessed by the growing agreement amongst scholars about the end of the ancient civilization and the Middle Ages. Following the researches of Sombart and Max Weber he thought that only a sociological periodization could be objective. This accords with his views on the well-known Marxist theory of the relation of the social and economic basis to the ideological superstructure. He did not, to be sure, accept the Marxist belief that the ideological phenomena were only reflections of the economic basis. "As we study," he wrote, "the thought and the feeling of Jesus, Paul, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Francis of Assisi, Bonaventura, Luther, Calvin, we realize that it is impossible to regard them as the product of class struggles and of economic factors." (*S.T.*, 1002.) Moreover, as we shall see later, he attached great importance to the after-effects of ideas the basis of which had vanished long ago. Nor did he accept the Marxist theory that "in the last analysis"—as the magical formula runs—the economic factor always triumphs. He believed that the relation of these two sets of factors was ever-changing and that it had to be determined afresh in every case. On the other hand, he was more fully aware than most non-Marxist historians of the powerful part played in history by social and economic forces. He maintained, for example, that the various forms of Christian ethics are determined pre-eminently by social conditions; that the Christian civilization of the Middle Ages was possible only within a relatively simple and undeveloped social setting; that the individualism of the Reformation presupposed the collapse of mediæval society; that its eventual victory could only be explained by reference to social and political conditions; and that these conditions also very largely caused the differences between Lutheranism and Calvinism. (*S.T.*, 1003.)

Troeltsch was more doubtful about the question whether the

essential elements of the past can be objectively determined. He offered only a hypothesis based on two terms coined by the German sociologist Toennies: "Gemeinschaft" and "Gesellschaft" ("Community" and "Society" or "Association"). Periods of Gemeinschaft are characterized by comparatively simple social arrangements of organic growth (in most cases peasantry and landed aristocracy), by strongly established and unquestioned traditions and social hierarchies, by a strong sense of belonging together. Periods of Gesellschaft, on the other hand, are distinguished by more complicated and articulate social relations of a more rational type, by a spirit of scepticism towards tradition and a loosening of age-old social bonds, and by a pervading spirit of individualism. Now Troeltsch suggests that the culmination of an epoch, its "classical age", coincides with the period of transition from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft; he mentions several examples in support of this thesis: the age of the Jewish prophets, the fifth century B.C. in Greece, and the central period of the Middle Ages round about 1300. Such classical ages, so the theory would run, give rise to those cultural achievements of permanent value which constitute the essential elements of our past.

However this may be, it is generally acknowledged that three main elements have come to us from the ancient civilizations: Jewish religion, Greek classicism, and Roman imperialism. The Middle Ages combined these elements under the leadership of the Christian Church and made them permeate the life of western and northern Europe. It is this complexity which makes the mediaeval synthesis so impressive and attractive, especially the subtle combination of the Graeco-Roman culture with Christianity. This complicated structure, on the other hand, accounts for the extraordinary and fruitful tension within mediaeval culture, and partly explains its decline. The Renaissance and Reformation of the sixteenth century are interpreted by Troeltsch as bringing about the temporary separation of the two main elements of our history, the world of Prophetic and Christian religion and the culture of antiquity. (*G.A.*, 282.) Troeltsch was aware, however, and was able to show by his researches, that the social effects of the Renaissance were not very far-reaching, and that even the new Protestant states, important as they were for the dissolution of Church and Empire, could not be said to have brought the Middle Ages completely to an end. He knew that the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were as much charged with religious fervour as the most enthusiastic periods of the Middle Ages, that the Counter-Reformation, its baroque culture and its neo-scholastic philosophy, were characteristic of

their age and that they were by no means confined to Catholic countries. In view of all this Troeltsch maintained that the Modern Age did not begin until the Age of Enlightenment, the period of the fully secular state and victorious capitalism, of rationalism, autonomous science, and declining religion. (On all this, cf. G.A.)

From such a conception of European "Kulturgeschichte" we could proceed to attempt a cultural synthesis. History could help us in that attempt because of the survival of ideas long after the disappearance of the particular situation which had produced them. But this involved not only survival but transformation into something more general, into a "Kulturprinzip", as in the case of Jewish ethics and Greek classicism, both of which lost all traces of their particular origin and claimed to be something of permanent and general validity. Even if such principles were temporarily forgotten, they never died completely, and thus it was always possible to renew them in a Renaissance or a Reformation. Historiography could play its part in such a renewing process which was not a mere repetition or rebirth, but also a new creation. Historical research on Christianity and classical antiquity, for example, had been able to transform those ideas and to shape their cultural influence at every stage. This coincides with T. S. Eliot's view on tradition: "The past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past." (*Tradition and the Individual Talent*.) One thinks in this connection of the recent research on Luther which profoundly altered traditional views and played its part in paving the way for Karl Barth's renaissance of Lutheranism; or of the Neo-scholasticism of Maritain and Gilson.

All this was valid, according to Troeltsch, only in the realms of ideas. In the sphere of social economics and politics no such rebirth was possible. Any plan involving a return to pre-industrial conditions was merely an expression of romantic nostalgia and of no practical importance. A knowledge of how the ancient Romans or mediaeval people managed their politics and economics might be very interesting as part of a comprehensive picture of their age, but it will not help us in our own task of social reconstruction. Troeltsch was a clear-sighted and cool-headed realist in these matters, as is evident from the articles which he published during and after the Revolution of 1918. He did believe, as we have seen, that ideas could strongly influence social reality, but only within certain limits. Within those limits, however, it was our task to develop a political and economic foundation capable of carrying the weighty superstructure of European thought. And Troeltsch, it should be



emphasized, fervently believed in the future of European culture.

### III

It is important to realize that most of Troeltsch's historical opinions were formed in the period before 1914. Although his attitude towards the nineteenth century was critical, he believed that all the main elements of European civilization were still in existence in his own time. Unlike some later religious thinkers, he did not doubt, for example, that modern civilization, with all its shortcomings, could still be called substantially Christian. He tried, indeed, to show that more modern ideas were secularizations of Christianity than the apostles of modern culture would care to admit. He was aware of only one contradiction between the modern spirit and Christianity: their respective conceptions of sin. That alone would to some of us seem decisive, but we can go further by questioning his views of the term "secularization". It seems that he made this term cover various meanings. It may denote the growth of interest in secular matters since the early Middle Ages and the corresponding decline of the hold of transcendental ideas over men's minds. It may also refer to the process of translation (notably in philosophy and political theory), of concepts and concept-patterns from the language of religion to that of secular learning. But both these meanings leave one fundamental aspect of secularization out of account. As long as secular things are in true communication with Christianity they are never regarded quite without suspicion or apart from a larger whole. Their claims to be ends in themselves or even goods in themselves are not accepted without reference to some ultimate justification lying outside them and acting as an inspiring and controlling force. In the Modern Age, on the other hand, the things of this world tend to become self-contained and autonomous, admitting of no transcendental standards by which they may be judged. One department of life after another issues a Declaration of Independence. In one of the realms only the decrees of Economic Man are considered valid; in another only the writ of the State is supposed to run; and in yet another kingdom everything that defies scientific analysis is ruthlessly exiled. It is, to say the least, more questionable than it appeared to Troeltsch whether modern life can still be regarded as based on our cultural inheritance, whether our main traditions are still actually, as distinct from potentially, in existence.

Whereas Troeltsch implicitly assumed that the structure of

our civilization was still standing, we are more inclined to echo the fisher-king's "These fragments I have shored against my ruins." In attempting a cultural synthesis we should now have to adopt a procedure which Troeltsch did not envisage: to emphasize over and over again what we have lost in the course of the last two or three centuries, in order to reawaken our historical consciousness and conscience.

These few critical remarks are in no way meant to disparage Troeltsch's work. It is quite possible to reject some of his conclusions and yet to admire his work as a constant source of knowledge and inspiration. He represents the best traditions of German scholarship, combining accurate learning with a comprehensive range and great constructive ability. In the study of European "Kulturgeschichte" it will certainly be possible to build further on the foundations he has laid, and those who are bold enough to work for a future cultural synthesis can derive from him much-needed strength and indispensable insight.

WILHELM SCHENK.

## JAPAN'S NEW STRUCTURE MOVEMENT

"Alas, we have seen too near the poor life of the Bee." (ROBERT BRIDGES:  
*Testament of Beauty*.)

IT is often stated that Japan is a totalitarian country, and, on the analogy of the more familiar totalitarian states, people ask themselves whether Japan, too, is run by an all-powerful party. Failing to find any such party, since the National Government Aid Association (*Taisei Yokusankai*) and National Political Association (*Yokusan Seijikai*) appear too nebulous and woolly to fill that role, they turn inevitably to secret societies. Their attention lights on the Black Dragon Society (*Kokuryukai*); the romantic sound of its name (Black Dragon is, in fact, merely the translation of the Chinese characters for the Amur River, and the society was formed in 1901 to advance the frontier of Japan to the banks of that river) satisfies them and they become convinced that secret powers run Japan. There is some substance of truth in this, since the Japanese feel that the trappings of power and the actual exercise of it do not go together, so that those who really wield authority tend to keep in the background. A better explanation is to be found, however, in the anonymous nature of the Japanese

state; no individual Japanese stands out, no decision is made without endless consultation. From one Japanese little emerges; from a gathering of Japanese much comes. The vital force which supplies the role of the Party in the Japanese totalitarian state is summed up in the thought and aims of the New Structure Movement, more a set of ideas than a concrete political movement, which governed political thought in Japan since the beginning of the aggression culminating in the present war.

The New Structure Movement, or "*Shin-tai-sei*", to give it its Japanese name, is one of the attempts to solve modern difficulties by returning to the real or imagined basic principles of Japanese national life and policy, which have been made consciously by Japanese thinkers and statesmen since the Meiji Restoration in 1868. Indeed, the Restoration itself, from which the modern era of Japanese history dates, is an instance of this tendency. The Emperor was snatched from hallowed obscurity in Kyoto and placed at the apex of the national pyramid; he was restored to that position of eminence and authority which the primitive chronicles of the Japanese race state to have been his at the dawn of Japanese history. Faced with the unexpected achievements and behaviour of the rest of mankind, the Japanese after centuries of isolation found themselves to be not as other men are. Many wished that they were as other men and advocated strongly the adoption of alien customs and modes of thought. Others questioned themselves as to why they were so different; they came to significant conclusions. The Japanese race differed from all others in that at its head was a divine being. Other nations had their kings, but they were the scions of ephemeral dynasties. The Emperor of Japan sprang from a line which had existed from time immemorial and which the ancient chronicles averred owed its origin to none other than *Amaterasu no O-Mi-Kami*, the Sun Goddess herself. The Emperor was thus a link with the Age of the Gods; he was in fact the sole remaining link with that golden age. His rule was the natural way of man; other nations had long since departed from this natural way. Such introspection was born perhaps of a sense of inferiority, but after the Japanese victories over China in 1895, over Russia in 1905, and with the Allies over Imperial Germany in 1918, Japanese reasoning changed. From a sense of not being as other men are, they developed a conviction that they were *better* than other men are. It now became their duty to improve others, to restore the natural way of man to mankind. At this stage those who had hitherto advocated the adoption of foreign thought and customs looked at that thought and those customs a little more critically. They found much to admire, but the whole left them with a

sense of incompleteness. They contrasted it with the definite structure of Japan and found it wanting.

The definite structure of Japan is due to the use of one sole principle in its construction: loyalty. Loyalty is the cement which binds the pyramid together. Loyalty first to the family, then to the head of the family, thence through all the sectional associations of life up to the Emperor. The individual exists only to serve all his superiors and ultimately to serve his Emperor. It is his joy and his privilege to serve; only by serving can he fulfil his purpose in life. It is the code of an extremely materialistic and realistic people, one of whom might perhaps argue as follows: "I am a Japanese; whatever I do, I can never escape from that fact. I spring from Japanese; after I die my sole claim to further existence is through the continuation of the Japanese race. My Emperor is the highest being known to me; he is the living head of my race. I serve him by serving my race; the greater glory of my Emperor and of my race is the sole end worth striving for." To him the Japanese race is something quite apart and as different from other human races as cats differ from dogs. The individual Japanese is bound by this network of loyalties; he is an integral part of the structure of the nation. His path is plain; he cannot choose another. "His not to reason why, his but to do and die"; nor is this to him a terrible thing, since no other individual Japanese need reason either. Life is cut and dried; it is hard and there is no escaping from it. Personal glory and distinction can only be gained through the achievements of the race and through its triumphal progress down the ages. For the sake of completeness one must add that Buddhism offered a poetical escape from austere reality by stating that reality is in fact an illusion. Nevertheless, reality or illusion, it is all a Japanese has. He may offer balm to his soul by singing, "Since I am convinced that Reality is in no sense Real, how am I to admit that dreams are dreams?", but it is a temporary consolation bringing small comfort.

By contrast with the fixed pattern of life in Japan, the Western cult of the individual seemed both impractical and incoherent. It was alluring in that it seemed to offer the individual the exciting and novel possibility of doing as he pleased, irrespective of the consequences of his acts upon others. But principally it was dangerous and destructive of all order. The insistence on the rights of the individual as opposed to his duties seemed the very foundation of "chaos and old night". Further, it was over-productive of thought and lay at the bottom of that restless succession of mutually antagonistic theories which characterized the Western world. Above all; it laid too much stress on the



intellect as opposed to instinct; the individual in his Western development thought too much and felt too little. Natural emotions and ties meant comparatively little to him; his own advancement or the cultivation of his personality was his goal. Such reaction to the West gradually became general in Japan; the West was denoted as being selfish and as being engaged solely in the pursuit of material prosperity. Helped perhaps by the type of Western ignorance which sentimentalizes over the "other-worldliness" of the East, the Japanese came to see their own way of life, with its demands for self-sacrifice and its insistence on loyalty, as being "spiritual". The "spirituality" of the Japanese way of life for mankind came always to be set against the "selfish materialism" of the West. The New Structure Movement is the political expression of these Japanese reactions. The phraseology of its protagonists may seem nebulous and grandiloquent; in essence it is a Japanese attempt to solve modern riddles by Japanese means.

As long as the New Structure Movement did no more than tighten up the social cadre of Japan it might well excite admiration. Some among us might see it as a valiant attempt to conserve the antique virtues of the race and to apply them to modern problems. It is logical and thorough; it gives the individual a clear conception of what is expected from him, and it offers him in return the satisfactory feeling of being needed, of being an essential atom of the nation. Unfortunately, it carries with it two ideas, which are of its very essence: that the Japanese race is better than others, and that the Japanese race should bring others to share in the Japanese "natural" way of life. Briefly, it fosters belief in the divinity of the Japanese race and in its divine mission. An instrument to this end is the tribal cult of *Shinto*, with the resurrection of which it is inseparably bound. It is thus vested with the bogus religious flavour which characterizes Nazi-ism. Like Nazi-ism, it tolerates no real religion that does not openly serve its purposes. But it has been wise to the resulting problems; with singular perspicacity it declared that "State Shinto" is not according to the law a religion, while it recognized four religions, which for their better regimentation were placed under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education. But, lest any should doubt its intentions, Japanese leaders have been careful to explain that while State Shinto is not a religion, it is *above* all religions. The more ecstatic, with Professor Fujisawa at their head, declare that Moses, Mohammed, and Christ went to school spiritually in Japan; but, like prodigal sons, they later went astray and must now be brought back to the parental house. Shinto is, in fact, regarded both as the birthright

of every Japanese and also as the serious business of life. Other religions are hobbies, which may serve some political purpose at some date. In fact, the New Structure Movement aims at, and perhaps has achieved, a rebirth of that primitive condition in which what passes for religion is indistinguishable from politics. It has re-created a militant Tribalism, more redoubtable than the German phenomenon because more deeply rooted in the consciousness of an even more regimented, more ignorant, and more docile people.

This Tribalism is by its very nature unsuited to the successful ruling of others. The belief in the divinity of the Japanese race leads to insufferable arrogance: the assumption that the Japanese way of life is the natural way of life for mankind clashes with the inability of the rest of mankind to recognize the peculiar wisdom of Japanese ideas and the divine nature of their inspiration. Tolerance of the views of others, recognition that others have rights, all the give and take that makes international relations even possible, go by the board. But, in addition to the fundamental incompatibility of Tribalism with international relations, there are other almost equally fatal corollaries. The fixed path which the individual must inevitably follow, his self-sacrifice and devotion to duty, leave him without the choice of good or evil. In Japan he follows the fixed path because he must; abroad he is free to choose his way, but his education has not provided him with the apparatus necessary for making the right choice. In fact, the Japanese individual is lost without the cadre provided for his guidance by the Japanese social system.

Divorced from the herd, his reason for existence ceases; he is hopelessly lost. His bewilderment, combined with his belief that he is divine and of a different order to the other mortals by whom he is surrounded, leads him to behave in the bullying manner now so tragically familiar to the inhabitants of all countries occupied by Japan. His planned and cut-and-dried society in Japan makes the Japanese anxious to regiment and fit into the same pattern the inhabitants of the countries he has overrun. In fact, this Tribalism inspires the most vigorous hatred in all those who are not Japanese. Its weaknesses are not necessarily apparent in Japan proper; they emerge with dazzling clarity as soon as it ventures beyond the confines of the islands of Japan.

While the New Structure is suited to the Japanese temperament and admirably adapted to the purposes of war, it is incompatible both with tolerable international relations and with the ruling of people of other races. It postulates a bigoted tribal state having no regard for any except those of Japanese race—a

society for which the sole moral sanction is loyalty—a pseudo-religion for which right and wrong apply only to Japanese and for which what the aggregate of the Japanese race does is inevitably and utterly right—Judaism without Jehovah—the most material state known to man and the most nearly approaching that of the bee.

A CORRESPONDENT FROM JAPAN.

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## A LANDMARK IN METAPHYSICS

THOSE of us who most appreciated the reflections upon contemporary Oxford philosophy contributed to the April DUBLIN REVIEW by the Rev. Vincent Turner, S.J., may have regretted all the more keenly the indifference to metaphysics which has characterized the "Greats" school for so long. It is surely rather a temper than a necessary preoccupation with preliminary questions, and the Chaplain of Trinity's essay\* has a peculiar value in this connexion. But it is very much more than a piece of ephemeral apologetics; it is a full-dress metaphysical work, a presentation of fundamental positions in rational theology which puts us heavily in his debt. It seems safe to say that no Catholic thinker can afford to ignore it. The reviewer asks leave to state his agreement with many of its conclusions and to express his admiration for a great achievement. The Dacre Press is to be congratulated on its share in it; the price is reasonable.

Before turning to the argument it will be convenient to mention some general features of the book. The prospective reader must be warned at once that it demands a sustained effort of attention; the writing is extremely close. Even when we have mastered a movement of thought we do not necessarily experience a steady spreading of illumination; we have to wait for disconnected gleams to interpenetrate, and by that time we may be peering at a fresh obscurity. But this, for the reader who is prepared to take the trouble, has its own reward. The question here is whether Mr. Farrer will in fact get widely read. Should we give out all the complexity of our thought, mapping all obstacles as they appear and our avoidance of them, or should we to some

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\* *Finite and Infinite*. A Philosophical Essay by Austin Farrer. Pp. xii + 300. (The Dacre Press. 20s.)

extent tabulate results, the short cuts which subsequent reflection shows us to our eventual positions? Should we cast all our bread upon the waters, trusting to the future, or should we prudently reserve, fearing the effects of present surfeit? Anyhow, the question must not imply that Mr. Farrer is unconcerned with actuality. It is a great part of the book's value that it is so keenly alive to present tendencies and prejudices in philosophy and takes its stand in the very centre of the arena, accepting challenges from any quarter, exploring the defensive positions of Revelationists, Positivists, Monists and Thomists and penetrating them at their points of weakness. The inclusion of Thomists in the list we shall refer to later.

The argument as it proceeds marks its agreement or disagreement with the conclusions reached by the great philosophers of the past and often takes them as provisional starting-points. So we begin to investigate the "elements of rational theology" by an analysis of passages from Descartes. This is undoubtedly the effective method; it captures an existing interest. And it has nothing to do with the merely historical treatment of philosophical problems, the exercise of historical scholarship concerned with merely relative results for thought. Historical scholarship is indeed one of Mr. Farrer's virtues, but this provides only the material on which he works, on which indeed almost any philosopher must work if his results are to be of real value. There are scarcely any detailed references, and they are not required; scarcely any contemporary writer receives explicit mention. There could be no very useful index. Mr. Farrer's English will be a peculiar pleasure—to some, one ought perhaps to say, for this is a very Oxford book, and others might find only an ironical pedantry and a sophisticated informality. Illustrations alternate gracefully from the freshness of common life to the dignity of classical myth. This review will do the book no sort of justice; nothing but a summary of the most relevant and important matters can be attempted, and many details which provoke discussion must be ignored.

Mr. Farrer eschews "dramatic method". There has been so much "cheating" in the vindication of theism in the past that anything which suggests the production of rabbits out of hats faces a solid prejudice. We begin, then, with an analysis of theism, with no attempt to prove its assumptions but merely finding what they are so as to settle what it needs and does not need to hold. This is to establish it as hypothetically intelligible (pp. 5-6). The key-note of the theme which we would emphasize is struck at once: "God is not an instance of a type of being already elsewhere directly experienced" (p. 4). Do Thomists



always observe this Thomist rule? "It is not merely that (as St. Thomas says) He cannot be demonstrated *a priori* . . . He cannot be demonstrated *a posteriori* either, i.e. from His effects, because we must first know that they are effects, and effects of a perfectly unique activity. But to know that they are effects in the relevant sense is to know the nature of the activity" (p. 7). The present writer notes with pleasure the exact coincidence with the attempts made on occasion by himself to clarify this most necessary point.

We are now launched upon "theological dialectic", and its procedure is well compared with that of Kant's Deduction of the Categories. Its business is not to "demonstrate" God's existence in the ordinary sense of the word but (to put it baldly) to show Him as involved in our experience. Language here is very easily misunderstood, but we must risk it. This is not ontologism, for it is only by using created relationships that the unique relation of creativity is apprehended. Thus the idea of analogy is introduced. We apprehend God as the perfect existent, and the traditional analogical "arguments" are statements of the created relations in which we apprehend Him; they can never substitute for the apprehending, and if understood as an attempt to do so they are sophisms. How much scholastic writing is condemned by this?

Here the treatment of the fashionable slogan "Existence is no predicate" is particularly noteworthy. "Existence is not merely givenness; it connotes a character, viz. of operating independently. If there is a higher sort of operation and operational independence than that of finite substance, then all existence will have reference to that, as well as to finite substance" (p. 30). We are to find the "ladder of ascent" to the infinite within ourselves, for here alone are we on sure ground (p. 44). Don't Thomists place too uncritical a reliance on the *scala naturae*? So on the analogy of proportionality, "That which originally comes to bear on the mind is not the scheme of proportionality, but God as active in us, a reality which drives the mind to such straits as these in the effort to comment upon it. Comment is an ill-chosen word if it suggests something optional and extrinsic. The comment is internal, and necessary to any distinct apprehension" (p. 34). And, finally, "we must have direct awareness of the [creative] activity, as well as of the effects and of the agent so far as implicit in the activity" (p. 61). If the "proof" that God exists is not also at the same time a "proof" of His nature it is of no service.

So far the assumptions of rational theology have been merely analysed. We turn now to the second part of the book (two-

thirds of the whole), "the examination of finite substance", for here the assumptions are to be justified. Unless we have knowledge of substance, of substantial relations and of these as finite, involving the infinite, rational theology is not a science. Here, then, we start fair. Thirty pages follow to justify the possibility of such an undertaking with Logical Positivists (or at least the man-eating kind) principally in view. The positivist test of the "real reference of propositions", usually called the "verification" principle, is well renamed that of "experienceable difference" (p. 68). If no imaginable "experience" could decide by its presence or absence between a given proposition and its contradictory, so the principle lays down, then this proposition has no meaning. Mr. Farrer excellently observes that universal features of our experience are excluded *a priori* by such a principle. "If, for example, we assert that freedom, or activity, is to some measure present in all consciousness as such, this becomes a non-differing factor . . ." (p. 69). Such assertions are to be made when we begin the search for substance, and it was of great service to show thus clearly that they cannot simply be put out of court by an arbitrary rule. It remains true that they cannot be "demonstrated" either for reasons similar to those which led to this conclusion in the case of God's existence. We are dealing with the unique, and therefore we must use analogy.

It seems necessary to say that the concession made towards the end of this most valuable section (p. 98) that "we have no indubitable data" (apart from sense-phenomena viewed subjectively and the conventions of language) is an unpleasant shock. Such a position can be professed, but can it be accepted as meaning what it appears to mean? And, if it can, must we all profess it? The concession is bound up with a general position which underlies the book, the only one of any importance which would seem to be a reason for misgiving. It is first illustrated in the Preface (p. vi), where one of the author's tasks is described as the showing of (natural) faith "as an act correlative with those highly important yet not undeniable intuitions which mould our practical thought". That, as it stands, may be unexceptionable. But now (p. 101) we are told that "will and intellect are inseparable though distinct, and the function of the will in judgement is to wager on the non-evident and deliver human life from moral—yes, and speculative—imbecility".

At the point which we have reached the statement does not seem capable of any satisfactory interpretation. Comment would have to take the form of a thesis about certainty. Are there no certainties (including certainties about substances) which I can acquire merely by willingness to attend to the evidence (Mr.

Farrer's "will" seems to have wider functions), convictions (that is) which I hold on such grounds as that no forthcoming article in *Mind* can be imagined as likely in the least to influence them? If certain philosophers profess not to acquire them, need prejudice or blindness on their part suggest prejudice or illusion on my own? This all-important subject cannot be pursued in a review. Clearly it remains open to Mr. Farrer to explain that the criticism has not reached the level of his thought.

In any case there is no need to interpret in an anti-intellectualistic sense the central matter of the book to which the passages just referred to are preliminary. Mr. Farrer calls his subject "will" because "being" is "act", and we shall require this language to describe the experience in which substance (the "self") is to be found. It is impossible to show the development of this section in any detail or even to discuss any of the questions to which it gives rise in less than a special article. Here if anywhere the suggestion would apply that the main results might have been made out with a less intricate and discursive treatment. The first of these results may thus be indicated: "The question of substance is the question whether there is ever any sense in saying that a complex exists *qua* complex rather than as the several elements which occur together in it. The act of willing provides an answer to this question, for it posits its own final phase as a complex; it is such a complex unit that is willed; except as such a whole it would never have come into existence at all. Further, the process by which it is enacted has a certain complexity, of which the several elements again would not ever exist unless the whole pattern were there to be the form of an act of will" (pp. 169-70).

All this has been impressively elaborated, and we presage the further stages. "If we take a line of continuous will-concentration" [the previous passage is the clue to this], "the dialectic of the 'one and the many' may be applied to it. . . . Either . . . we have a series of modes to one hypostasis or a series of terms interrelated by a relation of will-succession. The two schemes are equally right and equally wrong. The unity-in-plurality which will actualises cannot be exhibited by any scheme of terms and relations, but only be intuited *in re*" (p. 219). "The unity of the self is neither the focussing of the many acts in the single act, nor is it the continuity of activity from one act to the next. Both belong to the unity of the self, which is neither. It is itself indescribable; it is not a structure or pattern but that which has these" (p. 229). We have had to pass by such good things as a skilfully introduced and entertaining protest against the separation of ethics from metaphysics, a reconciliation of desire

with will, and the application of will considered as a "self-actualizing potency" (on the finite level) to the questions of freedom and moral character. If Mr. Farrer marks only his differences with Thomism, this is perhaps (if we may be forgiven for plagiarizing him) because one must be "tactful" in dealing with "venerable puzzles".

We have now a "clue" to substance and may apply it generally. In considering the problems to which a knowledge of *things* gives rise Mr. Farrer proposes an acceptable causal solution on lines familiar to (some) modern scholastics. ("The reader who has been nicely brought up ought to shut the book at this point" (p. 231.) Writers of manuals who still fall back on a naive realism in regard to the sense-qualities should ponder the following: "To be blue cannot be a mode of existing for it cannot be a mode of operating and therefore not of being" (p. 236.) The comment on the "plurality of forms" question is consistent with this: "Unity is found in the operation, and this must be determined by one essential form, plurality of forms would be nonsense. But as to the spatial overlapping and interweaving of activity-forms and the several sorts of inter-relation they can have, we are in no need to dogmatise" (p. 244). The conclusions which follow on form and essence in relation to substance, completing this main section of the book, demand a specially attentive study. Here it must be enough to express the view that they are in keeping with those developments in scholasticism in which "static" conceptions are not allowed to falsify reality.

With this solid foundation to build on the third and last part turns again to the traditional arguments for theism. Mr. Farrer gives the "essence and existence" argument the pride of place usually assigned to it and comments: "It cannot get rid of the scheme of the determination of a determinable, if it is going to keep any hold whatever on the finite analogy." It "points beyond itself to the inexpressible fact of creation" (pp. 268-9). "The argument from conditions [familiar as that of potency and act] succeeds only in so far as it raises the general question of sufficient reason, of which the essence-existence argument is the pure expression" (p. 282). Mr. Farrer treats this argument with great severity, and it is true that it is only a "popular" way of introducing the general question. But he holds that it does not necessarily introduce it at all, for an opponent may fall back on a theory of operations mutually conditioning one another. This criticism seems disputable. The criticism of the language of potency and act, on the other hand, is more cogent. "Naturally the theist will admit that the scheme of the argument



in this form is an acceptable shorthand expression of the theist *conclusions*; but it is hardly an argument from the finite, for it lacks a genuine finite basis from which to start. If taken seriously, the potency-act scheme denies all spontaneity or originativeness to finite action whatsoever" (p. 283). The last sentence refers presumably to the intuition of finite substance when the idea of God is still implicit. Unless we have completely misunderstood Mr. Farrer, he is not denying the creature's entire dependence upon God.

We must all recognize that any or all of St. Thomas's "Five Ways" often fail to convince; and this is because, when they do convince, it is never by way of formal demonstration producing its conclusion by an inevitable process. We can always be immoral, of course, and place obstacles in the way of conclusions; but the point is here that the premisses either do not contain the conclusion at all in the usual sense or else simply presuppose it. The analogical arguments, however, do *point* to the conclusion, and in such a way that we can indeed demand acceptance of it. "Why may not the composition of essence and existence be taken for granted? It looks all right." So Mr. Farrer puts a common position. His answer is: "We have then to try to make it look all wrong; and this can only be done by analogies. There is no *reason* why it is 'all wrong', i.e. non-self-explanatory; it just is so, and this must be appreciated" (p. 265). Such a result ought not to be in the least discouraging. The evidence is there, and we may have greater hope that philosophers will see it if we cease to provide them with excuses by the erection of our Aunt Sallies. Finally, we must note the genuinely metaphysical treatment of the problem of evil in a single page (278); [once the true nature of the evidence is grasped] "granted that existence at our level must be splintered, collocated and accidentally interrelated, it is not a matter of principle just what miseries arise. . . ."

A postscript must be added to throw further light on a position taken up in the above criticism. The true bearing of the proofs for God's existence, I have suggested, is often missed. Proof is the revealing of evidence; and the function of the syllogism in revealing evidence seems to receive a misplaced emphasis. Let us first consider this function in the most general way. You want to know (to borrow an example from Dr. Joyce) whether the whale breathes through its lungs. Very well, if you can convince yourself that all mammals do this and that the whale is a mammal, all you have to do is to hold these pieces of information together and you will have your answer. But isn't it obvious that the answer depends essentially on acquiring the information, that it then follows automatically? Syllogistic processes are

necessary for certain purposes, but in principle we do not need help to perform them once we have grasped the universal idea and the particular fact required for the premisses. If we need help it is preeminently for gaining the premisses, not for the reasoning as such. Mere logic is not the ground of serious controversy.

And here we have to show evidence of a quite peculiar kind. The man who wanted to know whether whales breathed through lungs knew what a whale was and what breathing through lungs was. All he wanted to know was whether these were found together. But the man who wants to know whether God exists wants to know about the reality of an alleged entity and one of an order all its own. The real question then cannot be answered syllogistically at all.

To show this evidence it is legitimate to say "the presence of act with potency in the objects of our experience is possible only on the hypothesis of Pure Act". But we must recognize what we are about when we say such things. We are pointing to a certain duality, everywhere present, and saying that this reveals to us two orders of reality, that of pure act or being and that of "dependence" (various metaphors will serve). We may call the original datum, if we like, an "actualized potency" or an "essence plus existence" (though these expressions raise their own difficulties)—but it comes to the same thing in the end: where he saw only *one* before a man must now see *two*—not two of one kind, but this irreducible and that, the one a "mirror" for the other.

We can encourage this conclusion in many ways. We can point to the *incompleteness* of the datum if it is looked at as something incomplex, but that is a negative way of putting it and may end in a negative result (in other words, Kant). We may argue for an uncaused cause, but the man who has not yet accepted the vital evidence will never get beyond the finite, though our topic may help him. We may properly allege the contradiction in self-movement, but is the principle of contradiction really grasped unless at the same time the Absolute is recognized?

DOM ILLTYD TRETHOWAN, O.S.B.

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## DANTE—HIS FRIENDS AND ENEMIES

## (1) DANTE IN FLORENCE

**T**HERE is a pathetic verse in one of Dante's *canzoni*\* which, though written in embittered mood, shows what must have been the depths and passion of his friendship :

For every burden should a man endure  
up to the weight he cannot bear and live,  
before he put his greatest friend to proof,  
in fear he stand aloof,  
for should such friend an evil answer give  
no measure then can fathom his distress;  
death will come sooner, with more bitterness,

Again, when in the *Convivio* he speaks of the incompleteness of life without friendship, though he is quoting Aristotle, he is plainly speaking out of his own experience. Of a nature to inspire either intense affection or intense hatred and to return them in full measure, his friendships and enmities are revealing. And here at the outset we may make a discovery so contrary to the general conception of him as to be almost startling. Of his friends we know much: of some we catch glimpses through the pearly mist of the *Vita Nuova* or in the poems he exchanged with them; others rise vivid in the Divine Comedy, bringing a heightened reality, a sharper pathos when in some suffering soul he discerns features known to him in life. But of his enemies, with one or two notable exceptions, we are left to surmise the bare existence; only when his hatred was justified by weighty public reasons would it find expression in his work. Personal adversaries his "disdainful soul" would pass over in scorn.

All through the Middle Ages we find a special cult of friendship, a sense of its possession of a sacramental quality. This is apparent in the Chanson de Roland and the Arthurian Legends and in the poets of *l'amour courtois*, for whom friendship or *franchise* stood midway between carnal love and celestial; it is apparent also in the theologians, in a Hugh of St. Victor or a St. Bernard, for whom love of kin and love of friends were the first two steps in the ladder leading to the love of God.

It was into a circle that had inherited the ideals of *l'amour courtois* that the young Dante came when, at the age of eighteen, he sent his first sonnet, on a symbolic dream of love and death, to the chief poets of the time. And while his namesake Dante da Maiano, evidently believing in putting the young in their

\* La dispietate mente che pur mira . . .

place, wrote a sonnet in reply interpreting the dream as the plain result of indigestion and suggesting obvious remedies, others, and among them the most famous, Guido Cavalcanti and Cino of Pistoia, wrote in generous welcome. Guido Cavalcanti would be for Dante his "First Friend". It is to him the *Vita Nuova* is dedicated. "Noble, courteous, daring but disdainful and solitary and intent on study," he is described by Dino Compagni the historian, and Boccaccio tells of him in the Decameron as elegant in manner and speech, able to do "everything that pertained to a gentleman better than any other". It is indeed as a figure out of the Decameron that he appears to us. A poet of exquisite lyrical purity, of sensitive appreciation of beauty and penetrating intellect, his philosophical speculations had won him a reputation for unorthodoxy. The Florentine wits, seeing him absorbed in moody meditation, declared that he was trying to prove that God did not exist. Once, indeed, he set off rather surprisingly on a pilgrimage to Compostella, but he got no further than Toulouse, where a lady's beauty—so his poems tell—stayed his journey.

With him is to be associated Lapo Gianni, judge and notary, whose poems are at once graceful and passionate. It is to him Dante refers in his charming sonnet:

Guido, I would that you and Lapo and I  
could be by some enchantment borne away . . .

Cino of Pistoia too was a man of law, who was to become a famous jurist, equally honoured for his delicate verse and his legal treatises, which include one on torture. His friendship with Dante—which led him to write one of his finest poems on the death of Beatrice—was a lasting one, surviving political dissent. In his *De Vulgare Eloquentia*, over twenty years after their first acquaintance, Dante speaks of him as one of these "who have most sweetly and subtly written poems in the Italian tongue".

Dino Frescobaldi, whose love poems have a fierce melancholy, would be equally constant. It was he who, after Dante had been driven into exile, sent after him the early cantos of the Divine Comedy, which he had thought lost for ever.

Two other poets must be remembered, to complete the picture, though their friendship for Dante would ultimately give place to implacable hostility: Cecco Angiolieri, whom Rossetti aptly called "the scamp of the circle",\* whose chief themes were

\* *Dante and His Circle*, a collection of charming translations of the poems exchanged between Dante and his friends, though no translation can give at once the harmony and vivacity of the Italian.



a mocking passion for one Bechina, the shoemaker's daughter, and rage against his father, and who would one day write a savage sonnet to Dante, goading him with the humiliations of his exile; Cecco d'Ascoli, more philosopher than poet, whose inclination towards forbidden knowledge would eventually bring him to a tragic end, and whose voice towards the end of Dante's life became one of insinuating enmity.

Yet another figure must be recalled, a poet-philosopher of an older generation, Brunetto Latini, of whom it was said that he was "the master who polished the Florentines, taught them to speak well and to guide and govern our republic politically",\* a man of vast and varied learning, in whom Dante recognizes his own chief master, remembering him with reverence and tenderness even while his pitiless sense of justice leads him to situate that master in the Inferno.

Reading many of the poems of Dante and his friends, banded together as the *Fedeli d'Amore*, Love's Faithful, one might think that love was the main business of their lives, or that they had sailed away on Dante's enchanted ship into a dream country. In reality, they were young men of intense and vigorous life. When in the *Vita Nuova* Dante tells dreamily of how Love appeared to him when he was "riding with a company of people", he was actually on his way to the battle of Campaldino, the great victory of Guelph Florence over Ghibelline Arezzo in 1289, when he fought in the front line as one of the many "gentlemen accustomed to war". At the same time the *Fedeli d'Amore* were the intellectuals, the *esprits forts*, of their day, penetrated not only with the culture of France and Provence but with Arabic philosophy and mysticism, and many of their poems have an esoteric sense to which the key is lost. It must be admitted that much of the *Vita Nuova* with its patent symbolism is unintelligible to us. The late Professor Valli believed that the *Fedeli d'Amore* formed a mystical brotherhood, illuministic, with certain secret tenets,† and he quotes the case of an Inquisitor a generation later who sought to charge all the Florentine poets with heresy. It is possible. Dante's own statement in the *Convivio* that the true content of his poems is not to be sought in their literal meaning suggests a parallel with the Arabic poet Ibn Arabi, who explains that it is customary in the Arabic allegorical style to combine "the sweet fancies of a lover" for a real woman with "constant allusion to spiritual revelations and to relations with the Intelligences of the divine spheres".‡ The traces of Arabic influence

\* Villani, *Chronicle*.

† L. Valli, *La Struttura Morale della Divina Commedia*.

‡ See *Dante's Poetic Theory*, by B. Barclay Carter. *Contemporary Review*, August 1941.

in the *Vita Nuova* are far more evident in the works of Guido Cavalcanti. Again, Dante was certainly permeated with the teachings of Joachim de Flora on the coming of the Third Kingdom, of the Holy Spirit; these might well have inspired such a brotherhood, as they inspired innumerable other societies proscribed by the ecclesiastical authorities, as well as such pillars of orthodoxy as St. Bonaventura. In the *Vita Nuova* in which Guido and his Primavera are shown as precursors of Dante and his Beatrice, Beatrice, in her symbolic aspect "who was a nine, that is to say a miracle, of which the root is solely the wonderful Trinity" seems a manifestation of the Third Kingdom.\* Read in this light, many of the poems of the *Fedeli d'Amore* gain in significance and intelligibility.

It would be a mistake to read heresy into their tenets, though the vulgar may well have done so. Guido, as we have seen, was dubbed an atheist, Cecco d'Ascoli a magician, and Dante himself cannot have passed as altogether *bien pensant* if we judge from the readiness with which he was accused of impiety on the occasion when, absorbed in his prayers, he forgot to uncap, as the custom was, at the Consecration in the Mass, or when with a crowbar he broke the stone well in the great font of the Baptistery, to release a child who had wedged himself at the bottom and was suffocating. But we may note that the man he calls in the *Vita Nuova* his "Second Friend" as Guido was the first, seems to have been Beatrice's brother Manetto Portinari, known for his piety and good works. Membership of such a society would have been compatible with perfect doctrinal orthodoxy, even while, as with other Joachimist sects, there was a liability to heretical infiltrations.† From Beatrice's words on the Mount of Purgatory we know that Dante looked back on the period of his "New Life" as one without reproach. To his Joachimist ideals and hopes of his youth he would remain faithful, but as elements in his integral Catholicism. Here as in all else, he took his own line, which as it grew accentuated may have led to divergence from others of his friends, and this would account

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\* We may note too that in 1289, the year given as that of the death of Beatrice's father, is the year the Joachimist Franciscan Olivi left Florence, where he had been preaching for two years, leaving an indelible impression on Dante's mind. Also that Dante's dream of the death of Beatrice is derived from the opening of the Sixth Seal in the Apocalypse, a special subject of Joachimist prophecy.

It is curious that Valli, who sees a clue to the doctrines of the *Fedeli d'Amore* in Petrarch's confidence: "Do you know what Dante means by love? It is love of the Holy Ghost!" never connected it with Joachim, or realized the confirmation brought to his theory by recent studies such as those of Aloys Dempf.

† Compare Freemasonry, which a hundred years ago could count among its members such rigorous Catholics as Joseph de Maistre and Daniel O'Connell, whereas today this would be impossible.

for a certain reserve in the sonnets written in his praise after his death by Cino of Pistoia and for Cecco d'Ascoli's hinting hostility.

Dante's friends were not confined to the poets, just as not only poetry but all the arts allured him. It will be remembered that he himself was drawing an angel when "some people of importance" interrupted him.\* He must have known Cimabue, in whom the Byzantine tradition culminated with the inklings of a new realism. Giotto, who would paint his portrait some years later—though still as the Dante of the *Vita Nuova*, sensitive, thoughtful, dreaming over a pomegranate spray—is another whose friendship would outlast his life. We know too that he loved the company of musicians and singers. One of the most beautiful passages in the *Purgatorio* is the scene where among the souls brought in an angelic bark over the dawn-lit sea, he finds Casella, the sweet singer who had set so many of his songs to music, and begs him to sing to comfort his weary spirit as he used to in life. And Casella sings Dante's own canzone, "*L'Amor che nella mente mi ragiona*", while the host of souls cluster round like doves, to hear.†

It was this passion for music that led him often to exchange quips with such a man as Belacqua, the good-for-nothing old lute-maker, whose laziness was a byword, but who understood music and his craft so well. He too is in Purgatory, waiting outside the gate in expiation of all the years he delayed repentance, sitting, his head on his knees, mocking at the ardour with which Dante and Virgil address themselves to the steep ascent—

so negligent  
that idleness his very sister seemed . . .

so like himself in life that Dante cannot forbear laughter.‡

It was said of Dante that though he studied much, he bore his learning lightly. We may picture him in his Florence, small, dark, imperious, but with a certain shyness, passionate, with a charming courtesy towards his friends but with unsparing retorts, as more than one tale tells, for those who bored or annoyed him. In all things he will have appeared the accomplished young nobleman, albeit impoverished.§ When Charles Martel, King of Hungary, spent three weeks in Florence in 1294, he and Dante seem to have been drawn to each other. He died the following year, at the age of twenty-four, and Dante, remembering him over twenty years later, would set him in Paradise, in the heaven of Venus, make him say:

\* *Vita Nuova*.

† *Purg.*, II, 76-120.

‡ *Purg.*, IV, 106-136.

§ With his half-brother, Francesco, he had to contract a heavy loan to work their lands, and this he was never able to pay off.

You loved me much, and you had reason to,  
for had I longer lived, I should have shown  
more than the foliage of my love to you.\*

Some time after the death of Beatrice (1290) between Dante and Guido Cavalcanti came estrangement, of which we know from a sonnet his "First Friend" wrote him in rebuke, accusing him of base thoughts alien to his "nobleness of mind" and of unwonted delight in unworthy company. The charge may have had further implications than appear on the surface,† but on the face of it it would refer to that period of *traviamento*, when round about his thirtieth year, by his own confession, Dante

turned his steps to ways that were not true  
after false images of good to follow,‡

adopting a mode of life that brought him into fellowship with some eminent ne'er-do-wells. Guido was noted for his fastidiousness in choice of companions. Dante, at this period at any rate, was less exclusive; he has a jocular sonnet addressed to one Betto Brunelleschi, a leader of gilded youth, whom Guido considered mindless and beneath his notice; he could accord indulgent intimacy to a notorious glutton such as Ciaccio, whom he would later show in the *Inferno* expiating his sins in "accursed eternal grievous bitter rain". He had indeed a strain of Hogarthian curiosity which, as he himself puts it, in the words of a Florentine proverb, made it possible for him to find himself "In church with the saints, with the drunks in the pub".§ There is a passage in the *Inferno* where Virgil rebukes him as Guido had done, for his interest in a vulgar battle of wits between two damned souls, and in his picture of his utter and inarticulate misery till his guide consoles him—"A greater fault were expiate by less shame!"—he admits himself the hypersensitive he was. Guido's reproach must have cut deep.

Still less to Guido's taste will have been Dante's intimacy at this time with a spendthrift young nobleman Forese Donati, nicknamed Bicci Novello. Dante and Forese eventually fell foul of each other, exchanging some biting and indeed scurrilous sonnets.

Bicci Novello, son of Lord knows who  
Unless his mother, Monna Tessa tells. . . .

writes Dante, and Forese gave as good as he got. They ended by composing their differences, and Forese in 1296 died an

\* *Par.*, VIII, 55-57.

† Valli, comparing the sonnet with other poems of rebuke exchanged between the poets of Dante's circle, imagines the attitude expected of the *Fedeli d'Amore* to be involved. Again, it may possibly have had a political reference.

‡ *Purg.*, XXX., 130-131.

§ *Inf.*, XXII, 14-15.



edifying death—it is said through Dante's influence. Between the Donati family and Guido Cavalcanti was a bitter feud. They were renowned for their beauty and recklessness, and were of those stocks that seem to produce both saintliness and wickedness. With them Dante's fate was interwoven.

His wife Gemma—the marriage was arranged when both were small children—was of the Donati house. But Forese's brother Corso, known as "The Baron" because of his arrogance, "a knight in the likeness of Roman Catiline but more cruel than he, of noble blood and handsome person, a delightful talker with beautiful manners, of subtle intellect, with a soul ever intent on evil doing"—thus his contemporary portrait\*—was to be the cause of Guido's death and of Dante's exile and ruin. His sister Piccarda was a nun. Corso dragged her from her convent and forced her into marriage to advance his interests, but she died soon after. Dante would remember her with reverent tenderness in his *Paradiso*, where she shines "like a pearl on a white forehead" in the Heaven of the Moon.

Such were the companions of Dante's youth. With their names the whole background of Florentine life rises, intense, beauty-loving, insatiably curious, passionate; a culture with something Attic in its grace and range, inset in a seething civic turmoil that time and again would find fierce resolution in bloodshed.

The years of the *Vita Nuova* had been years of comparative peace within the city; the old faction war between Guelfs and Ghibellines had sunk into abeyance through irremediable Ghibelline defeat, and in its stead came growing tension between nobles and guildsmen. In 1293 Giano Della Bella's revolution gave public power wholly into the hands of the Guilds. That Dante gave it at least a mitigated approval is shown by his registering himself three years later in the Guild of Doctors, so as to qualify for political office. One would imagine that Giano would have been a man after Dante's heart; a noble who forsook his order to give justice to the oppressed, his words when he heard of any wrong: "Let the city perish rather than such things should be!" seem spoken with Dante's own uncompromising spirit. With Giano's friend and champion, honest Dino Compagni, to whose history we owe so many vivid pictures of men of the time, Dante would work in close co-operation, with the same ideals, the same hopes. But while he has a fleeting reference to Giano in the *Divine Comedy*, as one of ancient

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\* Dino Compagni, *Cronica*, II.

ancestry who has "joined himself to the people",\* Dino's name is not mentioned—though it may be he whom Dante has in mind when he says that in Florence "two men are just, but are not understood."† Since but for the protection of a powerful friend Dino Compagni would have shared Dante's exile and was living in Florence, it would have been impossible for Dante to commend him by name without exposing him to persecution by the hostile rulers of the city. It is however possible that the Guild State he had helped to mould had brought him too much disillusionment for him to wish to recall his part in it or his colleagues.

For five years Dante was prominent in the political life of Florence, striving to promote civil peace, to "restore the torn body of his republic to unity".‡ Over and above the animosities of Guelfs and Ghibellines, nobles and people, new factions had arisen, centring as always round the personal feuds of great families—the Blacks, headed by Corso Donati, great nobles with a mob following, resentful of the new democracy, intriguing with the Pope, Boniface VIII, who sought to bring Florence into the net of the temporal power; the Whites, led by the rival Cerchi family, who were "men of low estate but good merchants and very rich, who dressed well and had many servants and horses and made a fine show", well-liked by the people because they were "kind and humane and ready to do favours"§ and who supported the popular government with its anti-temporalist policy and readiness to come to terms with the oppressed Ghibellines.||

Dante, who would more than once make clear what he felt towards the new rich, can have had small enthusiasm for such allies. This will have been still more the case with Guido Cavalcanti, but Corso's enmity made him one of their fiercest champions. In 1298 Guido, returning from his abortive pilgrimage, was ambushed by Corso's men. Back in Florence, disdainful aristocrat as he was, disdaining to be bound by bourgeois laws, he took justice into his own hands and set upon his enemy, followed by men of the Cerchi house. The tumult was quelled, but the city remained on the constant verge of civil war. In 1300 faction fights broke out anew. On St. John's Eve nobles attacked the Consuls of the Guilds as they walked in traditional procession to the Baptistery, crying: "We won the

\* *Par.*, XVI, 131.

‡ Boccaccio, *Vita di Dante*.

§ Roughly, one might say that the Whites were the Liberals of the day, but to attempt to determine with any accuracy the principles and composition of Florentine political parties is to enter a labyrinth comparable to that in which Yeats found himself when he tried to disentangle his "Fomorians beaked and unbeaked" for the benefit of George Moore as the latter inimitably relates in "Hail and Farewell."

† *Inf.*, VI, 73.

§ Dino Compagni, *Cronica*.

battle of Campaldino, and you have robbed us of our honours and offices." Dino Compagni was Gonfaloniere, Dante one of the six Priors, and, in a spirit of rigid impartiality, the fruit of Dante's passion for justice at all costs,\* it was decreed, for the city's peace, to banish the leading members of either faction to different localities. Guido Cavalcanti was ordered to Sarzana—an unhappy choice, for there among the unwholesome marshes he fell ill of fever, and though on the news he was allowed to return to Florence, he came back only to die. Dante was charged with having shown a friend's partiality in his recall.

Corso Donati fled to Rome, where he inflamed the Pope's wrath against the Whites still further by declaring them Ghibellines—as vague and damning a charge as one of Bolshevism today. In November 1301 his chance came. Abetted by the French Prince Charles of Valois, whom Boniface had sent to Florence, ostensibly as peace-maker, Corso broke into the city, and the Black dominion was established by fire and sword.

Dante, who from his first entry into public life had opposed the temporal aims of Boniface VIII, was Ambassador in Rome, face to face with his great adversary, with the hopeless mission of weakening his support of the Blacks, when the news of the disaster came. By March 1301 all his property was confiscated, leaving his wife and five children in Florence penniless, and he himself was condemned to be burned alive.

His first thought was to take his place among the leaders of the exiled Whites, seeking return by force of arms. Then the disintegration, so often the lot of men cast out from the ordered framework of normal life, set in. With many of his comrades in misfortune he had little in common. A failure in their plans was laid to his account, the usual accusations of treachery were flung, and he parted company with them. Years after, a biting reference in his *Paradise* to their "evil minded and shameful company", with a harsh triumph in their subsequent misfortunes, would show how their treatment of him rankled still. His life of sociable fellowship was over; henceforth he must make his way from city to city, from court to court, seeking what employment or hospitality he could find, "a wanderer, almost a beggar", solitary.

A chapter of life that has irrevocably closed glows in the mind with a mysterious permanence. The Divine Comedy shows how in Dante's memory was etched indelibly the Florence he had known.

\* On "the advice of Dante." Lionardo Bruni, *Della Vita di Dante*.

In the Inferno, among the fiery tombs of the heretics, he comes upon his Guido's father, held to have denied the immortality of the soul, who asks him:

Then if through  
this blind dark prison you go through might of mind,  
where is my son? Why is he not with you?

Dante replies:

I go not of myself, it was ordained  
that he who yonder waits should be my guide,  
whose leading may your Guido have disdained . . . \*

Words diversely interpreted, though most usually that Virgil as Dante's guide stands for reason illuminated by divine Grace, and that to such promptings Guido paid insufficient heed. What is touching is the tribute to the genius of his dead friend, and there is great pathos in the implication of a point where their communion of spirit ceased.

Corso did not die till 1308. His insatiate ambition clashed with that of others as powerful as himself, and he died in civil strife, struck down from his black war horse, which dragged his body along the Arno banks. To Dante his death would conjure up a picture of the demon horse of legend, galloping with flaming nostrils to Hell. But if Dante thus prepared a place for him in the infernal regions, it is indirectly, without personal animosity. There was a magnificence about Corso such as rarely failed to appeal to Dante whenever he encountered it.

The prophecy of Corso's fate—prophecy, for Dante sets the date of his mystical journey in 1300—is put on the lips of his brother Forese, who is expiating his sins of gluttony on the Mount of Purgatory. Tenderly he and Dante greet each other as though Dante felt remorse for the memories they shared of their past :

And I to him: "If you recall to mind  
what I was then to you and you to me,  
then grievous shall you such remembrance find."†

But here nothing clouds their affection, and as they part, Forese asks eagerly: "When shall I look upon your face again?"

It has been said that Dante put his enemies in Hell. This is a libel on him. Remembering Ciacco and Brunetto Latini, we might more truly say that in his scrupulous anxiety for justice he put his friends there—with the charming *sous entendu* that damnation cannot alter his affection. Even those who are in Purgatory seem, one might say, to have got there rather by good

\* Inf., X, 61-64.

† Purg., XXIII, 115-117.



luck than by good management. Forese speaks of his debt to the prayers of his widow Nella, Casella seems to have slipped through on the special Jubilee Indulgence of 1300, and Dante greets one Nino Visconti with pleased surprise:

O Nino, gentle judge,  
What joy to find you not among the lost!\*

But there is one instance where he aims a personal thrust. As he is crossing the river Styx, from among the souls condemned for violence the figure of Filippo Argenti surges up and tries to drag him under. Dante hurls him back, crying, "Down to the other dogs!" and exults to see the angry ghosts fall upon him in bestial rage. Filippo Argenti, generally detested for his acts of violence, had once publicly insulted Dante and struck him, but if he is thus grimly singled out it was because his brother, Boccaccio Adimari, now held Dante's confiscated lands and was the fiercest opponent of his recall. The shaft is aimed at the living, not the dead.† In the same way in the demons in the sardonic comedy that marks the circle of the embezzlers, it may well be that Dante, remembering the hateful pretext for his banishment, was satirizing his false accusers in Florence. But these instances apart, his *Divine Comedy* was too holy to him (his "*poema sacro*"), for him to make it an instrument of vengeance against personal foes.

With those who had offended not against himself but against the ideals he served—a spiritualized Church, a free and peaceful Florence, a united Christendom—it was otherwise. To Dante Boniface VIII was not only the prime author of his ruin,‡ won over by the Blacks to give Florence into the hands of self-seeking men, but one whose temporal ambitions and thirst for territorial aggrandizement made him the declared enemy of all who, like Dante, looked for a renewal of the Church in a spirit of Franciscan poverty. For him Dante prepares ignominious place in Hell in what could be described as an automatic machine for disposing of simoniac Popes, a fiery well in which they are fixed, one above the other, upside down (since they put temporal things above spiritual), each dropping deeper as the next arrives. But when Boniface was assaulted by the emissaries of the French King at Anagni, Dante would cry in indignation at the outrage to the papal office:

\* *Purg.*, VIII, 53-54.

† It is interesting that the child Dante saved by breaking the font in the Baptistery was of this very family.

‡ This is desired, already this is sought  
and soon shall be, through him who thinks hereon,  
there, where no day but Christ is sold and bought. *Par.*, XVII, 49, 51.

I see Anagni by the Lilies ta'en,  
*And in His Vicar, Christ a prisoner.*

It was from his devotion to the Church that he attacked the ecclesiastical organization of his day. Just as his bitterest and most constant denunciations are directed not against any individual but against Florence herself. Browning, when he spoke of "Dante who loved well because he hated", was talking nonsense. Like all great satirists, Dante hated where he most passionately loved.

BARBARA BARCLAY CARTER.

(To be continued)

## THE INFLUENCE OF ARISTOTLE'S DOCTRINE OF THE IMAGINATION ON THE THEOLOGY OF AQUINAS

### I

NOWHERE in his remarkable synthesis of Aristotelian and Christian thought was Aquinas's task more difficult and delicate than in the realm of psychology. The problem of safeguarding the independence and self-subsistence of the human soul while adopting Aristotle's definition of it as "the first actuality of a natural body potentially possessing life"<sup>1</sup>\* is, perhaps, the most well-known instance. But though the difficulty here was great it was by no means unique. One no less formidable was presented by the Christian doctrine of the Beatific Vision of God: "We shall see Him as He is" (I John iii, 2).

In a cryptic but important paragraph of the third book of the *De Anima* Aristotle speaks of the faculties of knowledge being potentially their objects, and asserts that these objects must be either things themselves or their forms. He points out that the former is impossible, and concludes with the commonplace but pregnant remark that "it is not the stone which is present in the soul, but its form".<sup>2</sup> Here, in an illustration destined to become famous, we have the original source of one of the

\* The references will be found at end of the articles.

fundamental principles of Aquinian epistemology: knowledge is effected by means of a likeness or similitude of the object known existing in the knower.<sup>3</sup>

But if this is the necessary mode of human intellection, is not the Vision of God definitely precluded? God's Essence is His very Existence; consequently anything distinct from that Existence (e.g. an image or similitude) is incapable of conveying the Essence. No finite image can mirror the Infinite Being.<sup>4</sup>

To pose the problem is to expose its difficulty; and though the subject of the Beatific Vision is not the primary concern of this paper, the foregoing brief outline of its inherent difficulty will not have been out of place if it provides us, as I think it does, with a standard of comparison by means of which we are able to judge the measure of the difficulty which Aquinas experienced in his efforts to conceive how the human soul can possibly understand anything at all when, consequent upon its separation from the body, it is deprived of sensuous images. For, to quote a modern son of St. Thomas, "these difficulties [i.e. those involved in the Beatific Vision] are, to St. Thomas's thinking, *trifling* [italics mine] compared to the difficulties arising from the fact that the human intellect necessarily understands through the medium of the phantasms or the imagination's concepts".<sup>5</sup>

## II

"The soul," Aristotle declares, "never thinks without an image";<sup>6</sup> "when the mind is actively aware of anything it is necessarily aware of it along with an image".<sup>7</sup> And Aquinas echoes him with: "The soul understands nothing without a phantasm";<sup>8</sup> "the nature of the soul requires it to understand by turning to phantasms";<sup>9</sup> "human contemplation . . . cannot exist without recourse to phantasm; for it is in accordance with man's nature that he should see intelligible forms through the medium of pictures in imagination."<sup>10</sup> Indeed it may be safely affirmed that there is no single tenet in Aristotle's entire system that St. Thomas more unreservedly adopts. He reiterates it throughout his psychology, and appeals both to experience and authority in support of it. "The soul . . . can understand only by turning to phantasms as experience shows";<sup>11</sup> and "anyone can experience this for himself—that when he tries to understand something he forms certain phantasms to serve by way of examples".<sup>12</sup> Then, in drawing a *reductio ad absurdum* against Averroes, he urges "neither shall we need phantasms for our understanding", and concludes "which is manifestly false

and contrary to the opinion of the Philosopher".<sup>13</sup> (Sc. Aristotle.) Nay more, "we cannot even reflect upon things of which we already possess knowledge without turning to phantasms";<sup>14</sup> for the intellect "to understand actually, not only when it acquires fresh knowledge, but also when it applies knowledge already acquired, there is need for the act of the imagination".<sup>15</sup>

The influence of this alleged law of the indispensability of phantasms is no less clearly evident in Aquinas's mystical writings. (St. Thomas wrote no *formal* treatise on mysticism, but he treats of the subject matter in the two *Summæ*, the *De Veritate* and the *Commentary on the Sentences*.)

"God cannot be seen in His Essence by a human being, except he be separated from this mortal life, because our soul, as long as we live in this life, naturally knows only what has a form in matter";<sup>16</sup> which implies, as we have seen, the existence of a phantasm in the imagination. The experiences of Moses,<sup>17</sup> and St. Paul,<sup>18</sup> were brought about miraculously and were contrary to nature: "As God works miracles in corporeal things, so also He does supernatural wonders above the common order, raising the minds of some living in the flesh beyond the use of sense."<sup>19</sup>

Gregory the Great, indeed, had maintained that "contemplative men . . . do not carry with them the shadows of things corporeal", and that "when they would look upon the Infinite Light, they put aside all images"; but Aquinas quite ingeniously takes this to mean not that contemplatives dispense with images, but that "their contemplation does not *abide* in these"<sup>20</sup> (italics mine). Again, when dealing with Paul's assertion that he heard "words not granted to man to utter",<sup>21</sup> Aquinas explains that this was "because he could neither think nor express in words what he had experienced"; the reason being that though he could remember the experience in some degree by means of certain "intelligible species" remaining in his mind, he could not, on returning to his normal condition, relate them to any phantasm or sense image; and both thought and speech are based on such images.<sup>22</sup>

It seems evident, then, that this law of the indispensability of phantasms was as axiomatic for Aquinas as, let us say, the law of gravitation is for us. And as he appeals so confidently to the testimony of experience in support of it, to experience let us go! Yet it must not be to the crude, uncontrolled experience of those unpractised in the art of introspection, but rather to the precise and subtly discriminating testimony of those well accustomed to observing all the elusive elements that constitute and condition human thinking.



## III

At the beginning of the present century a number of brilliant psychologists turned their attention to the higher mental processes: judgement, will, abstraction and the like. Marbe (1901) concerned himself with the first of these subjects and found in the course of his experiments certain mental states whose content could not be brought under the accepted classification of percepts, images and feelings. These "conscious attitudes", as they were termed, were characterized negatively by the absence of imagery. Ach (1905) investigated thought and will processes generally, and found his subjects reporting states of consciousness lacking anything in the shape of visual sensations or reproductions (images). And Binet (1903), working independently, encountered the same phenomenon. In 1907 a great advance was made by Buhler, who maintained that there was abundant evidence for the existence of thought without either visual or verbal images, and who positively asserted that these "imageless thoughts" are the only essential elements in thinking. Buhler's point of view was adopted by many researchers in America and England, and their work provided general corroboration of Buhler's thesis. T. V. Moore, as a result of his study of *The Processes of Abstraction* (1910), concluded that "there exist imageless mental contents representative of a visible object".<sup>23</sup> And Aveling, in his *Consciousness of the Universal* (1912), found that "images are not necessary as contents for thought", and that "the predicate of a judgement may appear in the consciousness as an imageless thought".<sup>24</sup> Since then additional and confirmatory evidence has been provided by many investigators. Professor Woodward, in his *Experimental Psychology*<sup>25</sup> (1938), enumerates a dozen researchers whose work, ranging from 1903 to 1934, has furnished positive evidence of the existence of active thought unaccompanied by any detectible imagery.<sup>26</sup>

It appears to have been established, then, that in so far as Aquinas based his conviction upon empirical evidence, he was not justified in drawing the general conclusion that "human thought cannot exist without a phantasm" and that "we cannot even reflect upon things of which we already possess knowledge without turning to phantasms". It would be a mistake, however, to assume that he held to the axiomatic character of this alleged law of the indispensable phantasm merely because of the empirical evidence, as such; rather was it because, in his opinion, this evidence was in perfect agreement with the funda-

mental principles and implications of Aristotle's rational psychology. Nay more, the very data of this evidence could actually be deduced, *a priori*, from these same principles. Aquinas speaks of the empirical evidence for our inability to understand except by turning to phantasms as an "indication" of an impossibility, the reason for which is to be found in the very nature of human cognition.<sup>27</sup>

## IV

In the light of his Aristotelianism Aquinas conceived of man as a composite, substantial being, whose nature is constituted by the union of an intellectual soul with a material body, the former standing to the latter as the determining form or principle. Consequently this union is, contrary to the opinion of the Platonists, a natural and essential one. Apart from the body the soul is an incomplete substance, and man is not truly man. When we invoke "Holy Peter", Aquinas allows that we are using a figure of speech: our invocation ought in strictness to be "O soul of Holy Peter".<sup>28</sup>

Now a being acts according to its nature, and the term or object of its activity is one proportioned to its faculties; consequently, "the proper object of the human intellect, which is united to a body, is a nature existing in a body. Now it belongs to such a nature to exist in an individual . . . and we apprehend the individual through the senses and the imagination. Therefore, for the intellect to understand actually its proper object, it must of necessity turn to the phantasms in order to perceive the universal nature existing in the individual."<sup>29</sup>

Indeed, so essentially natural is it for the human soul to understand in this way that Aquinas does not hesitate to assert that, as regards its knowledge of natural things, even the "species received from the influence of the Divine Light" does not compensate it for its loss of sensuous phantasms consequent upon its separation from the body: "the soul apart from the body through such species does not receive perfect knowledge, but only a general and confused kind of knowledge".<sup>30</sup>

We see, then, how deeply rooted in the fundamental principles of Aquinas's psychology this tenet really is, and how pervasive and potent is its influence on his entire doctrine of the nature of man. And we may add that none realized better than he the portentous difficulties which its acceptance implies for anyone who attempts to explain how the separated human intellect is still capable of understanding despite its deprivation

of the phantasy. In the first article of the eighty-ninth question of the *Summa Theologica* Aquinas sets out the objections against its doing so with great force and candour; so much so, indeed, that as we watch him dialectically twisting and turning this way and that, in order to elude their tentacle-like grasp, we can hardly avoid the impression that even his remarkable mental agility has reached its limit. But whatever our opinion may be as to his success or failure, we cannot fail to admire the intellectual integrity of one who, convinced of the truth of his scientific and philosophical principles, resolutely refused to abandon them in order to obtain an easy solution of his problem by the adoption of alternative principles that he held to be fundamentally unsound.

## V

But, as a matter of fact, did Aquinas actually succeed in demonstrating that "phantasms stand to the act of understanding as colours to the act of sight"?

From a whole catena of passages running through the two *Summae*, as well as from his formal treatment of the subject in the question: "Whether the intellect can actually understand through the intelligible species of which it is possessed without turning to phantasms?"<sup>31</sup>—it seems obvious that Aquinas intended to exclude the possibility of anything that could properly be designated thought apart from the existence of phantasms. But on turning to his argument in support of the thesis that "our intellect understands corporeal and material things by abstraction from phantasms", we seem to detect a general shift or modification of his position.

In the body of the article, where he outlines his general argument, we notice a significant qualification of his former simple statement that "the proper object of the human intellect is a nature existing in corporeal matter". He now formulates this principle as "it is proper to it [intellect] to know a form existing individually in corporeal matter, but not as existing in this individual matter"<sup>32</sup>. But is not the intellect false if it does not envisage the form as existing in this individual matter since "the forms of material things do not exist as abstracted from the particular things represented by the phantasms"?<sup>33</sup> This objection, which Aquinas brings against his own thesis, would certainly seem to be the logical outcome of the principles he himself makes use of when arguing his case for the indispensability of phantasms even when we are only reflecting upon knowledge already acquired. Aquinas,

however, denies the cogency of this objection in a lengthy and subtle reply.

He draws an analogy from the case of the senses, pointing out that if we understand or say that colour does not exist in a coloured body, or is separate from it, there would be error in this assertion. But if we consider colour without reference to the apple which is coloured, there is no error because an apple is not essential to colour, and therefore colour can be understood independently of the apple. "Likewise," he declares, "the things which belong to the species of a material thing, such as a stone, or a man, or a horse, can be thought of apart from the individualizing principles which do not belong to the notion of the species." Nor does this imply any falsity in the understanding; for "the intellect would [only] be false if it abstracted the species of a stone from its matter in such a way as to regard the species as not existing in matter".<sup>34</sup>

Now the inference to be drawn from this reasoning would seem to be that the intellect is *not* incapable of understanding material things apart from phantasms; for if the intellect can understand, and understand truly, the nature of colour apart from any particular coloured body, just so can it understand the nature of a material thing apart from any particular individual thing represented by a phantasm. For the intellect's concept of individuality is a no less adequate representation of a particular individual than the idea of "coloured body" is of a particular coloured apple, ball, piece of cloth or what not. "Coloured body", as such, no more exists apart from particular coloured things than individuality exists apart from concrete individuals.

The same conclusion is implicit also in Aquinas's reply to the second objection, which is based upon the celebrated axiom—matter is the principle of individuation. "Material things include matter in their definition, and therefore material things cannot be understood apart from matter. Now matter is the principle of individualization. Therefore things cannot be understood by abstraction of the universal from the particular which is the process whereby intelligible species is abstracted from phantasms."<sup>35</sup>

Aquinas meets this objection with a subtle distinction. He asserts that matter must be "twofold, common, and signate or individual". "Now the intellect abstracts the species of a natural thing from the individual sensible matter, but not from the common sensible matter; it abstracts the species of man from *this flesh* and *these bones*, which do not belong to the species, as such, but to the individual; whereas the species of man cannot



be abstracted by the intellect from *flesh and bones*." <sup>36</sup> Here again it is plainly maintained that the intellect can understand a material nature apart from the individualizing conditions apart from which it does not exist. What need then has the intellect of phantasms which are the representation of these conditions?

To all this, however, it might be objected that Aquinas's real position in this matter has not been properly understood. What has been assumed to be a change in his point of view or a modification of his position is merely the incidental result of his analysis of the unity of an indivisible complex act into its separate constituents. He abstracts from the function of the phantasy—whose contribution is nevertheless presupposed—merely in order to exhibit more clearly the part played by the intellect, as such, in an act which is the product of both. Aquinas never considered that the intellect is capable of so much apart from, and independently of, the phantasy, and that the latter merely adds an additional element to an act complete in itself. On the contrary, he thought of the former as being continuously and habitually dependent upon the latter no matter what its object might be.

Now this is probably a correct estimate of Aquinas's real position. In the same article, immediately after his vindication of the ability of the intellect to understand material things, he repeats the old formula that the intellect "cannot understand even the things of which it abstracts the species, without turning to phantasms". <sup>37</sup> But the question is: has Aquinas really proved this? For it is to be noted that for a justification of his contention he refers us back to Article 7 of Question 84.

Now we have already seen that the precise reason given there for the indispensability of phantasm is that since "it belongs to a material nature to exist in an individual" and since "we apprehend the individual through the imagination" it follows that "for the intellect to understand actually its proper object it must of necessity turn to phantasms". But in the present article Aquinas shows that the things which belong to the species of a material thing, such as a stone, or a man, or a horse, can be thought of apart from individualizing principles which do not belong to the notion of the species. And he maintains that "the intellect would [only] be false if it abstracted the species of a stone from its matter in such a way as to regard the species as not existing in matter". <sup>38</sup>

Now by these express declarations it would appear that Aquinas has virtually relinquished his *a priori* proof of the indispensability of phantasms; for this proof turns precisely upon the point "that the nature of any material thing cannot be

known . . . except inasmuch as it is known as existing in the individual".<sup>39</sup> Apart from this it has no force. Consequently, by his admission that the things which belong to the species of a material thing can be understood apart from the individualizing principles, Aquinas cuts the nerve of the only *a priori* proof advanced in support of his thesis.

No doubt the position Aquinas wished to maintain is that "Our intellect both abstracts the intelligible species from the phantasms inasmuch as it considers the natures of things in the universal, and nevertheless [only] understands these natures in the phantasms".<sup>40</sup> But the fact remains that in proving the former, he virtually invalidates his argument for the latter.

It might be maintained, of course, that although the intellect can understand the specific nature of a material thing apart from its individualizing conditions, and granted that the knowledge so obtained is true as far as it goes, nevertheless it does not go far enough. For it takes us no further than the nature of a thing considered simply as an abstract specific essence, necessarily lacking that completeness or fulness of being which is only obtained from the knowledge of a particular specimen directly apprehended by the senses or represented by a phantasm. And since the specific nature of a corporeal being does not exist except in an individual, it follows that "the nature of a material thing cannot be known completely and truly" if our understanding of it lacks that special quality which only the *individual* can convey.

But is it not a formal characteristic of all scientific knowledge thus to abstract from the individual? And did not Aquinas subscribe wholeheartedly to the dictum *Scientia est de universalibus*?<sup>41</sup> "No science," he tells us, "deals with individual facts."<sup>42</sup> Indeed, he goes so far as to declare that knowledge of the particular is not to be looked upon as a perfection for the human intellect. "To the perfection of the understanding," he says, "belong species, genera and the reasons of things. But to know other singulars, their thoughts, their acts, is not a perfection of the created intellect, nor is its natural desire turned in that direction."<sup>43</sup>

Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that although the intellect may not be able to apprehend the *individual* directly it can conceive *individuality*. When the intellect understands the nature of a material thing it applies to it, either implicitly or explicitly, the concept of individuality.

## VI

To sum up, then: First, the decisive influence of Aristotle's doctrine of the imagination on Aquinas's mystical theology, and his conception of the conscious life of the separated soul can be demonstrated from the *Summa Theologica* and the *Summa Contra Gentiles*. "Nowhere is the hand of Aristotle held more strongly or firmly upon his disciple."<sup>44</sup>

Secondly, neither by the argument from experience, nor by a *a priori* deduction does Aquinas succeed in proving that human thought cannot exist without the continuous presence of images in the imagination.

And lastly, may we not conclude that the Christian apologist might well be thankful to those modern experimental psychologists who have provided him with an opportunity of freeing himself from the dominating influence of the alleged law of the "indispensable phantasm"? For it cannot be dismissed as a mere relic of mediaeval mythology masquerading as a scientific principle. The great majority of the moderns have held to it with a pertinacity no less great than that shown by Aquinas himself.

Now the logical implication of this principle is, as Aquinas's system shows, that the human mind must be regarded as one to which it is so essentially *natural* to "see intelligible forms through the medium of pictures in the imagination" that the substitution of any other means must, it would appear, inevitably render its mode of activity radically unnatural. This dependence upon phantasms "proceed(s) from the soul's very nature itself . . . and since death does not change its nature it can then *naturally* [*italics mine*] understand nothing, since phantasms are wanting to which it may turn".<sup>45</sup>

It is true that Aquinas provides us with an explanation purporting to show how this conclusion may be avoided.<sup>46</sup> But despite all the dialectical subtlety he employed, it may well be doubted whether Aquinas has furnished, or *could* furnish, any *scientific* explanation equal to the task of effectively confuting his own most pertinent and formidable objections. Has he any really safe refuge from their insistent attacks save in the appeal to the overriding theological consideration that God, who has decreed a conscious life for the separated soul, and who is also the author of that life, causes nothing to act unnaturally? "Nor is this way of knowledge [i.e. by means of species arising from the Divine Light] unnatural; for God is the author of the influx both of the life of grace and of the light of nature."<sup>47</sup>

PETER STUBBS.

## REFERENCES.

- <sup>1</sup>*De Anima*, Bk. II, 1. *Contra Gentes*, Bk. II, lxi. *Sum. Theol.*, lxxvi, Art. 5. (Sed contra.)
- <sup>2</sup>*De Anima*, Bk. III, 8.
- <sup>3</sup>*Sum. Theol.*, I, Qu. 12, art. 2; Qu. 76, art. 2, ad. 4. *Contra Gentes*, Bk. I, ch. liii.
- <sup>4</sup>*Sum. Theol.*, I, Qu. 12, art. 6, corp.
- <sup>5</sup>Dr. Hugh Pope, O.P.: article "Beatific Vision", Vol. *God*, Camb. Summer School Series.
- <sup>6</sup>*De Anima*, Bk. III, 7.
- <sup>7</sup>*Sum. Theol.*, Qu. 75, art. 6, ob. 3.
- <sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 2-2, Qu. 180, art. 8.
- <sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, Qu. 84, art. 7, corp.
- <sup>10</sup>*De Anima*, Qu. 15.
- <sup>11</sup>*Sum. Theol.*, Qu. 12, art. 11, corp.
- <sup>12</sup>II Corinthians xii, 1-4.
- <sup>13</sup>*Sum. Theol.*, 2-2, Qu. 180, art. 5.
- <sup>14</sup>A. B. Sharpe: "Ascetical Teaching of St. Thomas". Vol. *St. Thomas Aquinas*, p. 222. (Camb. Summer School Series: Burns Oates.) *Sum. Theol.*, 2-2, Qu. 175, art. 4, ad. 3.
- <sup>15</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 180.
- <sup>16</sup>*Op. cit.*, pp. 241-2. I am indebted to this work for the brief historical review of the experimental evidence. Cf. also Woodward: *Experimental Psychology*, pp. 783-8, and Flugel: *A Hundred Years in Psychology*, pp. 235, 239-40.
- <sup>17</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 786.
- <sup>18</sup>The objections that have been raised by some eminent psychologists may be waived here, since they rest upon an assumption that Aquinas never made, nor possibly even envisaged, that imagery is present, and functions, subconsciously. Aquinas's appeal was to evidence that is available to introspection. An effective criticism of these objections is to be found in Spearman's *Nature of Intelligence*, ch. xii; and from the non-experimental point of view in Hoernle's *Idea, Image and Meaning* (Mind, N.S., No. 61).
- <sup>19</sup>*Sum. Theol.*, Qu. 84, art. 7, corp.
- <sup>20</sup>See Wickstead: *Reactions between Dogma and Philosophy*, pp. 411-12.
- <sup>21</sup>*Sum. Theol.*, Qu. 84, art. 7, corp.
- <sup>22</sup>*Sum. Theol.*, Qu. 84, art. 7.
- <sup>23</sup>*Sum. Theol.*, Qu. 85, art. 1, ob. 1.
- <sup>24</sup>*Sum. Theol.*, Qu. 85, art. 1, ob. 2.
- <sup>25</sup>*Sum. Theol.*, Qu. 85, art. 1, ad. 5.
- <sup>26</sup>*Sum. Theol.*, Qu. 84, art. 7, corp.
- <sup>27</sup>Opusculum 63, in lib. *Boethii de Trinitate*, Qu. 5, art. 2. Cf. *Contra Gentiles*, Bk. II, reply arg. 2.
- <sup>28</sup>*Sum. Theol.*, Qu. 1, art. 2, ob. 2.
- <sup>29</sup>Wickstead: *Reactions between Dogma and Philosophy*, p. 371.
- <sup>30</sup>*Sum. Theol.*, Qu. 89, art. 1, corp.
- <sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, Qu. 89, art. 1, corp. *Contra Gentiles*, Bk. II, ch. 79, reply to arg. 5.
- <sup>32</sup>*Sum. Theol.*, Qu. 89, art. 1, ad. 3.
- <sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, Qu. 89, art. 1, corp.
- <sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, Qu. 89, art. 1, corp.
- <sup>36</sup>*Contra Gentiles*, Bk. II, ch. xiii, G. 7.
- <sup>37</sup>*Sum. Theol.*, Qu. 84, art. 7, corp.
- <sup>38</sup>Numbers xii, 8.
- <sup>39</sup>*Sum. Theol.*, Qu. 12, art. 11, ad. 2.
- <sup>40</sup>II Corinthians xii, 4.



## SOME RECENT BOOKS

*The Nature and Destiny of Man. A Christian Interpretation.* Vol. II. "Human Destiny". By Reinhold Niebuhr. (D. D. Nisbet & Co.)

THIS second volume, in which Dr. Niebuhr applies to human history the Christian view of man, as he understands it, elaborated in his first volume, confirms its merits and defects.

As a radical critic of all humanist and naturalist views of man, whether they are idealist, materialist or vitalist, realist or romantic, Dr. Niebuhr has made an outstanding contribution to Christian apologetics. He has shown that none of these philosophies takes or can take the full measure of man's stature or of his sinful fall. Christianity alone does justice to all the facts of man's nature, his present position or his place on the confines between nature and spirit, historical succession and eternity. But his own understanding of Christianity is inadequate. The Atonement occupies the centre of his scene, the Incarnation recedes to the background. In fact the Church is blamed for the central position accorded to the latter.

The orthodox Christian doctrine of the Incarnation that the personal union in Christ of two natures, Divine and human, is rejected on the ground that it involves attributing to "His nature" the contradictory characters of humanity and Godhead. This, however, is precisely what the doctrine does not do and was formulated to prevent. It would almost seem that Dr. Niebuhr misunderstands "person" in its theological use as meaning a human selfconsciousness. Nor does he put forward any clear alternative view. Yet it is precisely the Incarnation as believed by the Church, which alone meets man's nature and situation as the author so well describes them and renders the Atonement intelligible. We have, in fact, failed to reach any very clear notion how Dr. Niebuhr understands the doctrine which is for him the central Divine revelation. Somehow, but how?, God takes unto himself human sin and its inevitable result and overcomes them by His mercy. How we must persist in asking.

As in the previous volume the author identifies mysticism with a pantheistic interpretation of it which the great Christian mystics reject. He therefore assumes that Christian mysticism is an illogical compromise between Christianity and mysticism.

His criticism of the mediaeval Catholic synthesis assumes that the body of Christ was identified so completely with the visible Church that an Absolute and Divine value was claimed for the every utterance or policy of the Holy See. This, of course, was far from the case. Nor did any doctrinal pronouncement bar the later development

of Catholic theology which recognizes wider possibilities of invisible membership of the Church than were envisaged by mediaeval theologians.

When the Church claims to be the *societas perfecta* she does not claim to be a society which is in all respects perfect. She claims a complete juridical status and character as compared with other and purely human societies.

Nor does she, as Dr. Niebuhr seems to think (p. 56), regard her dogmas as a substitute for the truths of another order discovered by the natural sciences.

For Dr. Niebuhr, however, every doctrine formulated in human language must partake the fallibility, relativity and limitation of all human truths and cannot therefore be a final and Divinely revealed truth. What then of the revelation made by Christ? What of the human and historical fact of the Crucifixion and the human record of it? No doubt human pride and even more the human craving for certain truth has constantly ascribed absolute and final truth to truth which is partly relative and partly provisional. And this is true even of theological doctrines and pronouncements which lack the guarantee of Divine Revelation.

Nevertheless, under pain of complete scepticism, we must admit that even in the natural order man can attain truths which are certain and to the extent of that certainty absolute and final. Why then cannot God reveal such certain and final truths in the order of grace? What must be admitted in the natural order is possible *a fortiori* in the supernatural.

These exaggerated scepticisms are the more deplorable, because stated more moderately and duly qualified Dr. Niebuhr's warnings against ascribing absolute and complete truth or value to partial truths and historical contingencies might have been convincing and salutary. Even as it is, those who are willing and able to make the necessary qualifications should learn much from Dr. Niebuhr's brilliant review of history, particularly the history of Western man in the Christian era.

Though Dr. Niebuhr believes that the Reformers, and Luther in particular, understood, as no Christians before them since St. Paul, the profound abiding sinfulness even of redeemed man and his need therefore of Christ's imputed righteousness, he is not blind to what he well describes as Luther's moral defeatism, his blindness to the value of human truth because it is not the truth of God, his acceptance of human wickedness, particularly social and political, as part of man's inevitable sin. And he sees that the insistence of the radical Protestant sects on individual sanctification and social justice was a valuable corrective to it. He even allows that in certain respects Tridentine Catholicism was in the right as against the reformers.

Indeed he does justice to what is positive in modern humanism, its belief in boundless possibilities open to human thought and action in spite of its blindness to the fact that their realization is and must be the occasion of further sin. But he does not see that Catholic Christianity is the synthesis, though on account of the limitations and the sins of Catholics not fully realized, for which he is looking. Even Luther's fiducialism is a perverse anticipation of the way of self-abandoned trust taught by St. Theresa of Lisieux. If only such profound Christian thinkers as Dr. Niebuhr, instead of criticizing the Catholic religion from without, were engaged in realizing its inexhaustible resources from within. That is the regretful wish left with a Catholic reviewer by this book of brilliant insights which nevertheless misses the mark at which it aims.

The Pauline text, "yet not I but Christ liveth in me", does not in any way support the doctrine of imputation. On the contrary it teaches an internal sanctification produced by the indwelling Christ. It is not wrong to seek our happiness provided we seek it rightly. God made us to be happy in and with Himself, and we may, and should, seek what He intends for us. Therefore the criticism of Mortimer Adler in p. 128 note cannot be upheld.

And when Dr. Niebuhr informs us that "Empirical observations proving the wide variety and relativity of all historical forms of culture" have dissolved "The false universalities of dogmatic religion", he has not only confused distinct orders of truth, but has capitulated to the naturalism which he has himself so ably refuted.

When St. Paul's teaching, that "There are diversities of administration", i.e. diverse vocations and functions in the Christian Church, is adduced to prove that a valid Eucharist need not be celebrated by a priest episcopally ordained (p. 233, note), Scripture is wrested in a fashion which, had it been the work of a Catholic exegete, would have elicited the author's strongest and justified reprobation.

We are sorry that he identifies Catholic doctrine with the view of two Catholic theologians, though we must admit, widely supported, that non-Catholic worship should be suppressed in a country predominantly Catholic. For the sincere practice of an imperfect form of worship is preferable to its alternatives, an insincere practice of the form of worship in itself Divinely willed or not to practice any form of public worship.

E. I. WATKIN.

*The Figure of Beatrice.* By Charles Williams. (Faber & Faber.)

In his latest book, *The Figure of Beatrice*, Mr. Charles Williams gives us a detailed and brilliant analysis of Dante's principal writings and draws from them the general philosophical purpose behind the poet's work. A book of this kind is written presumably for two types of

reader. There are those who already have an intimate and scholarly knowledge of the works under discussion and who will find their appreciation enlarged—or their own theories outraged—by the new analysis. Then there are the others—usually a far larger class—who, though interested, are not experts and may not have much more than a glancing acquaintance with the subject of their author's analysis. For such people, the purpose of a book of criticism should be to send them back with new enthusiasm to the sources.

It would probably be much more suitable if a book of the quality of *The Figure of Beatrice* were reviewed by a reviewer from the former class—an expert in Dante, someone capable of taking up Mr. Williams' points with learned criticism, of disputing his interpretation, and in this way of adding still further to the specialized knowledge of the skilled Dante lovers. Unfortunately I belong to the second class and the only excuse I have for reviewing a book about books which I know only in a very fragmentary way is, obedience apart, that a great many of the people who take up *The Figure of Beatrice* will belong to my category as well and may be encouraged by my experience first to read Mr. Williams' book and then—the proof that the criticism has succeeded in its purpose—do what I propose to do—go on to a serious reading of the *Divine Comedy*.

As I understand it, Dante's work expresses in highest poetry the highest intuition not only of poets, but of philosophers and mystics and of ordinary men and women at those moments when their intelligence and emotions are most sensitive and aware—that the universe is fundamentally intelligible, ordered, harmonious and good. One of the marks of great poetry is surely its capacity to catch up the mind and heart into these states of heightened capacity. It is difficult to analyse the effect on one's imagination of a line such as

Put up your bright swords for the dew will rust them.

—for one thing the effect is bound to be very personal—but for me it is to set a hundred strands of association in my brain vibrating so that from the one line an innumerable series of obscure images begins to stir. The new image does not overlay or contradict them. It quickens them just as the adding of a new colour to a pattern enriches every other colour or the resolution of a chord turns a string of notes into music—"out of these sounds he frame, not a fourth sound, but a star". The impression on the imagination is at once one of great freshness yet of great familiarity, the beauty is "ever old and ever new". It is like discovering for true something long known and accepted, like getting to know in a new way a loved and very familiar object, or like entering a valley full of unremembered shapes and trees and fields, only to discover that it is the back way into your father's house.



It has always seemed to me that it is by virtue of this intuition—of the particular beauty being related to a general pattern which is at the same time very astonishing and very familiar—that great poetry points to the most profound intuition of religion, philosophy, and indeed of poetry itself, at least of romantic poetry. This is, as I have suggested, that the universe is part of an intelligible and coherent order in which truth and beauty and knowledge are one, in which particular things fit into the general structure by conforming to their proper function, and which is, above all, good. The earth is not a monstrous booby-trap. Created things reflect the glory of their Creator (or the perfection of their archetypes).

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. One day telleth another, and one night certifieth another. There is neither speech nor language, but their voices are heard among them.

It is natural, I suppose, that romantic poets should have found this vision of unity and goodness so often in the beauties of the countryside—I do not myself know anything to equal Goethe's outburst of praise and joy:

*Dein' unbegreiflich hohen Werke  
Sind herrlich wie am ersten Tag.*

But obviously it is not simply a matter of seeing the Creator in the magnificence of His handiworks. The intuition of Romantic poetry, if it is to be a genuine intuition, has to cover all reality, above all it has to include that part of reality so toughly recalcitrant to the insights of romanticism—that part called man.

Here again the visions of Romantic poetry and philosophy and religion are very near each other. The human order like the natural order was created good. The Natural Law—the law of right and wrong written on the fleshy tables of the heart—is the pattern of the City, of the New Jerusalem. It governs the functions of the individual soul, in his family, in the city, in the state, in the world of states. It is the pattern of harmonious living. It is the way of life intended for man. In it freedom and law are one, for the law, being natural, is no more onerous than sleep or breath. Desire and will run together, for the will only wills the good and the heart only loves it.

*All' alta fantasia qui manco possa:  
Ma già volgeva il mio disiro e il velle,  
Sì come rota ch'egualmente è mossa,  
L'amor che move il sole e l'altre stelle—*

Power failed the high imagination; but the Love which moves the sun and the other stars rolled my desire and my will, as if they were a wheel which is moved equally.

Love is indeed the energy of the whole city, the dynamism which moves not only "the sun and the other stars" but every human mind and will.

This is the vision—of the perfected Commonwealth, of Utopia, of the City of the Sun, of the classless society, of swords beaten into ploughshares and the lion and the lamb lying down together—which has haunted the great Romantic thinkers of every age, the poets, the prophets, the philosophers. It is a vision that can be evoked by poetry, by the generosity of a friend, by music, by good company, by a remembered sunset, above all, by love. The vision may be more grandly conceived in other states, but is it anywhere more intensely felt than in the awakening of romantic love? At the summit of the *Paradiso* Dante saw love moving his will and his desire as it moves the sun and the other stars. But the beginning of all his verse was an intuition of the same truth when he saw Beatrice for the first time and

A kind of dreadful perfection has appeared in the streets of Florence; something like the glory of God is walking down the street towards him. . . . "I tell you when she appeared from any direction, the hope of her admirable greeting abolished in me all enmity, and I was possessed by a flame of charity which compelled me to forgive anyone who had done me an offence; and if anyone had asked me a question about anything, I should have said only *Love!* with a countenance full of humility."

Yes, but was it true? Or rather, is it true? What is the value of the vision of romantic love? Or of the romantic vision in general? This is the question with which, if Mr. Williams' analysis is correct, Dante is most concerned. For obviously the romantic vision is not self evidently true. The ploughshares are still swords and, the world over, the lion is devouring the lamb as it always did. For each individual soul, the idea of the perfect commonwealth is shattered every day either by sin—which is precisely the destruction of the pattern of Natural Law—or by the sins of others. Lovers are betrayed, the city is betrayed, the unimaginable does most painfully and regularly occur. "If there be rule in unity itself, this is not she." But it is she. Then was the romantic vision which clothed her once with the "glory of God" all snare and untruth? Or can it still be affirmed? If so, in what form?

It is possible to dismiss the whole romantic intuition as nonsense. The world may be a malign joke or an unintelligible agglomeration of atoms. Christians obviously cannot dismiss it. But they can react in opposite ways. Broadly speaking there are, Mr. Williams suggests, two methods of approach. One is the Way of the Rejection of Images, the other of their Affirmation. The first way tends to postpone the romantic vision to the Beatific Vision and to look on the beauty and love of the created universe as snares to catch the spirit of man away from the contemplation of the Uncreated Good. In its heretical

form, this is Manicheanism. In its near-heretical form, it is a standing temptation to the religious.

The other way, the Way of Affirmation, is much less well tried, and much less well mapped. For the thousand Saints of the Way of Rejection—the penitents, the anchorites—we have only St. Thomas More, husband, father, citizen, statesman. For the noble legion of virgins and widows, we have not so far a single holy woman canonized specifically as and for being a wife and mother. The Way which most of us have to follow is not so well lighted as the exceptional way to which only the few are called. Yet, although Our Lord suffered on the Cross, He also came “eating and drinking”, and was accused by his enemies of gluttony and wine-bibbing. The first miracle saved the gaiety of a marriage feast and changed God’s noble creature water into God’s still more noble creature, wine.

If Mr. Williams’ analysis is correct—I can say only that it is supremely convincing—Dante in the *Vita Nuova*, in the *Convivio* and, lastly and most greatly, in the *Divine Comedy* attempted to map out the Way of Affirmation. The symbol of this affirmation is Beatrice. The glory he saw on the first day in the streets of Florence was the true glory of the created child of God.

The immediate suggestion, put forward elsewhere, which coincides with that canzone, is that what Dante sees is the glory of Beatrice as she is “in heaven”—that is, as God chose her, unfallen, original; or (if better) redeemed; but at least, either way, celestial.

The intuition of pure love was a true experience of the primal love that moves all things, and although death, separation, the treachery of Emperor and Pope, the dereliction of Florence and finally exile were to tempt Dante to abandon the Way, to deny the validity of the first vision, in the *Divine Comedy*, even though it was written to some extent in exile, he reaffirms its validity. Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. The ordinary activity of men and women living fully in the world are as many paths to beatitude. The body—*la carne gloriosa e santa*—the holy and glorious flesh—is God’s creature. Love and marriage are high vocations. Service of the home and service of the city are the perfect service of God. All this is affirmed in the *Commedia*. Even the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio*, which show the fall and the purgation of those who pervert the Way of Affirmation, are a sort of restatement in reverse of the validity and truth and beauty of created things. Paolo and Francesca are barely below the lip of hell. The lecherous souls are cleansed not on the lowest but on the highest terraces of purgatory. The depths are reserved for the proud, the haters, the violent and the lowest ice of all for the traitors—for treachery is the final betrayal of the Affirmative Way.

I cannot say how true Mr. Williams’ analysis is to Dante, but it seems to me entirely true as an analysis of the romantic vision and, what

is more relevant, to the problem of expressing the Christian way of life in terms "understanded of the people". Today in three spheres above all false affirmations are leading our society to chaos. The pseudo-romanticism of the cinema and the sentimentalism of newspapers and novels have "glamorized" love between the sexes and the glamour has ended in a sordid standard of personal licence. The genuine passion of protest against poverty and disease and ignorance and all the other social violations of the Divine pattern has started from purely material premises and by ignoring the spirit of man and his destiny of freedom, threatens to end in a tyranny of control as evil in its way as the abuses it seeks to cure. Finally, what is national-socialism, with its perverted hero-worship, its megalomania, its display and hysteria, but a disastrous attempt to give deeper significance to a political order which had lost touch with reality?

How can these perversions of the Affirmative Way be countered? Not entirely by the Way of Rejection, for ordinary unconverted people still have to go on living in the unrejected world. They can surely be met only by an enormous expansion and practice within the Christian community of the Way of Affirmation—the vision of marriage as a noble and joyous vocation, the hungry pursuit of social justice by those who believe in man's soul as well as his body, the entry into political life of those who have tended to scorn it most—religious men and women who can restore it to its rightful relation to God and the Law. There are signs of such an awakening in the Church—the social encyclicals, the whole social movement in pre-war France, Catholic Action, the growing popular interest in the Natural Law, the new stress on the Mystical Body. It may seem a far cry from Dante to Bishop Ketteler and the canonization of St. Thomas More. Yet Dante wrote at the crown of Catholic mediaeval culture. The details of his vision have changed. It is the mass state, not the Italian city, that is our concern. But was his vision in general irrelevant? Surely not. And if the Christian community is serious in its vocation to restore all things in Christ, why should the experience, the inspiration, the vision of the greatest Christian poet be thought irrelevant to the great endeavour?

Some people have complained that Mr. Williams' book is obscure. It is not easy reading. Neither is Dante. But like Dante, it repays the reading and, above all, it repays re-reading. Like a really fine piece of music, the *Figure of Beatrice* gives more of itself at each re-hearing. It is full of wisdom. There are few subjects which Mr. Williams takes up that he does not in some way illuminate. Coleridge once wrote: "Dante does not so much elevate your thoughts as send them down deeper." I think this is true of Mr. Williams. Of course, it is not always easy to be compelled to think more deeply. But the gain is very great.

BARBARA WARD.



*The Politics of the Unpolitical.* Herbert Read. Routledge. 7s. 6d. (Collected Essays.)

MR. READ's *Unpolitical Man* is, very properly, man as artist and as craftsman; not in a restricted sense, because Herbert Read follows Eric Gill's definition—the artist is not a special kind of man, but every man is a special kind of artist. In this sense, we are all unpolitical men. And if it is not always possible to agree with Mr. Read's conclusions, the matters that he discusses concern us all.

Herbert Read is no journalist. He is, in all likelihood, one of the contemporary writers whose work will last into the future. These essays may well remain among the books by which the problems of our day will be judged and understood.

The student of the future will sometimes be puzzled. At times he will experience the full delight of seeing a true thing so said that it casts a light all round it; and again, he will wonder into what foggy antiquated world this critic of the early twentieth century has vanished. For Herbert Read is often right in general, and wrong in particular—which is another way of saying that his taste is less certain than his judgement. This is not immediately evident because Mr. Read ventures his taste continually, and has at various times put his money on movements and individuals that have not turned out well, though some—Gerard Morly Hopkin for example—have. But if Mr. Read sometimes cites the wrong names, one must not conclude that the ideas of which they seem to him to be instances are equally negligible. Neither should it be held against Herbert Read that his natural kindliness inclines him to see good in the work of young writers and artists, when he can.

Nor must one be misled by the frequency of the words Anarchist, Democracy, and Revolution in the pages of this book. Herbert Read is not advocating any of these things in the sense in which they are generally understood. He is really and literally defending the unpolitical man. His socialism is that of Kropotkin and William Morris, not that of Karl Marx. His democracy is the ideal of the Greeks, not the actuality of England or America. And the word Revolution he uses to indicate the drastic nature of the change that would be needed to make this bad world better. If Herbert Read's Revolution has become entangled with what the Communists mean, that is because both use the word to some extent in a religious sense. Mr. Read makes it very clear that Russian totalitarianism seems to him far from the perfect state. As for Revolution in the sense of violence, Mr. Read holds Gandhi's doctrine of non-violence. Indeed Mr. Read goes far out of his way to avoid the logical conclusion that Christianity is the thing he is looking for; and that to the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven there is no short cut.

The thesis that runs through all the essays of this collection is that

true culture cannot be imposed on society from above and without; whether by the State, as in Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia; or by museums, lectures, and the school syllabus, as in this country and America. The very word Culture, whether spelt with a C or a K, indicates the absence of natural expression from man's handiwork. Art is a living thing, springing from within and "from under", as Mr. Read says. Peasants and savages possess a natural aesthetic sense that is not to be found in industrialized modern society, where the things that we use and the houses we live in are too often designed not primarily for use, but for profit. That is the artist's indictment of capitalist society, and of the kind of socialist society that merely transfers the same system from private to public control. The taste of industrial man has been vitiated, and Herbert Read voices the protest of the generation whose roots have been severed from the past, the peasant stock, and the traditional values. Mr. Read would like us to cut the losses, finish the task of demolition that the war has begun, and start again.

Mr. Read is a scholar with as good a knowledge of the past of literature and painting as anyone living. Therefore, when he assures us that culture is not to be learned from books and museums, we should hesitate to disagree. And yet men cannot live without a past as well as a future, and the longer the past of which we are conscious in ourselves, the better for the future we are likely to make. If we have no past, it is our misfortune, perhaps also partly our fault. Mr. Read's enthusiasm for clearing away the rubbish and starting again is not reassuring. The whole thing has even a taint of that cheap culture that caters for the readers of *World Review* and the like, who want only the very latest thing, and have no time to waste over last year's science, art, or morals; and of Mr. Priestley's paradise with doors of pure plastic. But it is useless to deny that the disinherited generation of dwellers in suburbs, for whom Mr. Read speaks, does exist; that the contact with the past has been lost; or that roots once severed do not easily grow again.

On what foundations, then, does Mr. Read want us to build the future? Here is his summary of the essential features of a natural society:

- The liberty of the person.
- The integrity of the family.
- The reward of qualifications.
- The self-government of the guilds.
- The abolition of parliament and centralized government.
- The institution of arbitrament.
- The delegation of authority.
- The humanization of industry.

"Our social philosophy must begin with the family," Mr. Read says. "The Pope is right, the Archbishop of Canterbury is right, Pétain is right; the psychoanalysts and the anthropologists are right. The Stalinists are wrong, the Nazis are wrong, our own democratic socialists and public school fascists are wrong, for they all exalt the state above the family. From whatever realistic angle we approach the problems of human life, the family is seen as the integral unit." And again: "The political doctrine known as democracy has implied an important principle which, if it were not systematically misrepresented and misunderstood, would still justify us in using the word. This is the *principle of equality*. . . . This is the fundamental doctrine of a Christian community and of all other types of essential communism. . . . But the equality acknowledged by democracy has in practice been something very different. God has been eliminated from the formula and we are left with a mere equalization or levelling of man with man. The spiritual measure has been discarded, and man is left to dangle in the material scales; and for centuries the counter-weight has been a piece of silver."

And yet, in the last instance, Mr. Read does not make God the measure of all things; neither does he accept materialism, although his tendency is to adopt the vocabulary of the materialists. "Let us build," Mr. Read says, "cities that are not too big, but spacious, with traffic flowing freely through their leafy avenues, with children playing safely in their green and flowery parks, with people living happily in bright efficient houses." But cities are not built with hands alone. Not all the functional architects, design-units and town-planners in the world can ensure that the people in the "bright efficient houses" shall live happily. Materialism may be a sure guide to harmonious proportions in architecture, and good design in pots and pans—excellent things so far as they go. But it by-passes the human problem. The most aspiring Gothic is functional, in relation to a certain kind of idea. So is Baroque art, so is Assyrian, or any art that expresses adequately a human conception. The functional art of the materialist is one thing—and at least let us admit that it is better than the chaotic ugliness of industrialism run riot. But if man is a spiritual being, and not, as the materialists believe, a thinking animal, the dimensions of his art are such that these "bright efficient houses" will not solve his problems. And when was the pursuit of happiness, even in the worthiest and most socialistic form, a functional philosophy for human beings?

Herbert Read is too honest, too humble, and too intelligent a man not to leave open many doors that rasher and less honest Utopians would shut. His more political left-wing friends and enemies may go round shutting those doors after him. Mr. Read himself still retains an open and an honest mind.

KATHLEEN RAINE.

*The Spanish Labyrinth.* An Account of the Social and Political Background of the Civil War. By Gerald Brennan. (Cambridge University Press. Pp. xx + 384. 21s. net.)

THE title of this work is, we think, its best feature. The word "Labyrinth" exactly fits the contents of the book. It is indeed a labyrinth, a perfect maze of twisted facts. Instead of helping one to understand the intricate social and political situation of Spain, it only adds to the confusion in the reader's mind.

Prefacing what further remarks we have to make with a blind act of faith in the author's good intentions, we would draw attention first to that part of the book which, in our opinion, is the least objectionable, viz, to Chapter VI (pp. 87-130). In this chapter the author deals with the Agrarian question. Curiously enough, he prefaces this particular chapter with a quotation from Father Mariana, a sixteenth-century Jesuit—a quotation which shows what a Spanish Jesuit could write in the palmy days of the Spanish Inquisition without incurring any censure. The author wisely treats of the Agrarian question geographically. He discusses it as it exists in each of the following regions: (i) Galicia; (ii) Asturias, the Basque Provinces and Navarre; (iii) Old Castile and León; (iv) Aragón; (v) Catalonia; (vi) the Levante; (vii) Granada; (viii) Southern Old Castile and part of New Castile; (ix) La Mancha and Extremadura; (x) Andalusia. He says very rightly that the Agrarian question has profoundly affected the social question. In speaking of the Basque Provinces and of Navarre he makes the following illuminating and accurate remarks (pp. 96-7): "These are the satisfied areas of Spain—the only ones, apart from a few irrigated districts in the south-east, where one can say that there is no social problem. They are also the most Catholic; in them the village priest still has immense influence with his flock and Catholic benefit associations protect the peasants against those three miseries of rural life—sickness, failure of crops, and money-lenders." Yet from these two perfectly sound judgements he completely fails to draw the obvious conclusion, viz. that the absence of an agrarian question in the more Catholic regions is due to the greater fidelity in those regions to the principles of the Gospel.

The author should have added that in these provinces, particularly in Navarre, there are no socialists, no anarchists, no anarcho-syndicalists worth the name. On the contrary, the people are thoroughly identified with Catholic tradition and principle—an industrious, sober, hard-working race, averse to politics, but loyally devoted to their families as well as to the State. The percentage of ecclesiastical and religious vocations in Navarre is actually the highest in the world—in some districts as high as ten per cent. Education flourishes throughout this province; it is the stronghold of traditionalism. Most of the soldiers who helped to reconquer Spain for Christ during



the late Civil War—from beginning to end to the Navarrese the Civil War was a *religious* war—came from Navarre, so much so that in some villages no man between the ages of 15 and 65 was left; all had gone to join the Crusade. Now, according to the author's own testimony, the Navarrese are "the most faithful to the Monarchy" (p. 97), quite contented and happy with "their small but relatively prosperous farms" (ib.). Why does he not put all these points together and admit that there must be some logical connection between them, that, in fact, the happy social conditions prevalent in Navarre are closely connected with the religious belief and principle of the people?

But the author of *The Spanish Labyrinth* would never dream of drawing such "Carlist" or "Clerical" conclusions. And this brings us to his ideological outlook, which cannot but be pronounced unbalanced, unfair, fanatically anti-Catholic and anti-clerical. Moreover, in several places, the book is inaccurate, unhistorical and unworthy of the imprint of the university which publishes it. We write these unpleasant strictures with a full sense of responsibility. We do not question the writer's good faith, but we feel it is the reviewer's duty to warn the reader that most of the judgements contained in this book are completely untrustworthy.

A major instance of unbalance and unfairness occurs on pages 346 to 369, where there appears a copious bibliography. Over two-thirds of the items listed are works written to attack the Catholicism of the Spanish people. Some of them, like those of Morote (*Los frailes en España*), Pio Baroja (*El Cura de Santa Cruz y su Partido*), Jiménez Asúa, are sheer pamphleteering or worse. Again, the catalogue contains a large number of books on Spanish subjects written by foreigners. Now, there is no reason why foreigners should not know as much about Spain than the Spaniards themselves, or even more. Professors Allison Peers and Fitzmaurice-Kelly are cases in point. But unfortunately a fair proportion of the books on Spanish affairs produced by foreigners and given in this bibliography may be described as literary Castles in Spain. However, our main point is that there are many volumes published by Spanish Catholics on the Spanish themes dealt with in this book which are not even mentioned. Is it because the author has not read them? If so, he should be reminded of the elementary obligation of every writer on disputed questions of acquainting himself with both sides. During the last quarter of a century many books have been written in Spain by Spaniards who could well have helped the writer of *The Spanish Labyrinth* to find his way out of it. There is, for example, the popular series of thirty-two volumes *De Cuestiones Sociales*, edited by the Jesuit Fathers from 1929 to 1935, which comprises works by Fr. J. Azpiazu (*Problemas Sociales de Actualidad*, *Patrones y Obreros*, *El Derecho de Propiedad*, *La Actualidad Monetaria*

*Española*), Fr. N. Noguer (*La Escuela Unica, La Acción Católica*), Fr. L. Izaga (*La Iglesia y el Estado*), etc. Other prominent Spanish authors, writing independently, have touched on similar questions; for instance Pemán (*Cartas a un Escéptico en Materia de Formas de Gobierno*). Moreover, during the same period, well-informed writers contributed scholarly studies on these matters to *Revista Eclesiástica*, edited by the Benedictines of Silos, *Razón y Fe*, by the Jesuits of Madrid; *Ciudad de Dios*, by the Augustinians of the Escorial; *Ciencia Tomista*, by the Dominican Fathers; and to other minor publications. Special mention must be made of the leading articles written by Herrera and others in *El Debate*, one of the outstanding dailies of Europe; it is significant that the premises of this paper were methodically destroyed by the Reds during their occupation of Madrid.

Other evidence of bias in the selection of the bibliography comes to light on closer examination. For example, several novels of a political or anti-clerical character are included, such as those by Pérez Galdós, Pio Baroja, and other notorious anti-clericals, whereas novels of a kindred nature, and considered by many superior as literary compositions, are simply omitted, as, for instance, Pereda's *Don Gonzalo González de la Gonzalera*, *Hombres de Pro*, etc.

The inexcusable bias discernible in the bibliography is apparent throughout *The Spanish Labyrinth*. The Carlists are dismissed in just twelve pages (201-14). This is, in a sense, fortunate for their cause, as the short presentment given by the writer bristles with odious charges and distorted facts. On the other hand, the Anarchists (pp. 131-69), Anarcho-Syndicalists (pp. 170-202), and Socialists (pp. 215-28) are given 83 pages in all, and several of their number well known as organizers of bloodshed are naively idealized. Yet, in spite of himself, the writer is compelled on occasion, by the sheer evidence of the facts, to pen lines like the following (p. 205): "If the Carlists had had their way none of the Civil Wars, none of the discords and divisions that have since rent Spain would have occurred." In other words, Spain's century-long agony is not to be laid at the door of the Catholic and traditionalist elements, therefore presumably the other parties must be to some degree implicated.

The most disgracefully unfair pages of this book are those in which the author happens to mention the Church, or the Clergy, particularly the Jesuits, who evidently are his *bêtes noires*. He reserves for these groups of Spanish citizens such epithets as "stupid", "foolish", "blind", "savage", "bloodthirsty", "grasping", etc. These adjectives are applied with equal impartiality to Cardinals and Bishops, to monks and priests, to prominent Catholic laymen, to the common people who happen to practise their religion; that is, to what the writer terms "the Church". The passages are too numerous to need special reference. After a while, the reader gets tired of

meeting the same abuse again and again. It is odd that the author seems to consider "the Church" or "the Clergy" as a political party, which, of course, they have never been. Sometimes he identifies them with the Carlists. Anyone conversant with the Spanish political history of the past seventy years or so will recognize this as an absurdity. It is a well-known fact that since Leo XIII's time the Carlists have been left very much alone by most of the clergy even in Northern Spain, excepting perhaps Navarre.

The Jesuits, of course, come in for the largest measure of vilification. But it is obvious that the writer has no notion as to who are actually Jesuits. Among them he includes, for example, Blessed Antony Mary Claret (see p. 44, note 2), founder of the Missionaries of the Heart of Mary (Claretian Fathers), and beatified in 1934, a sufficiently well-known figure to make the blunder inexcusable. The episode referred on the same page about Blessed Claret and the Bleeding Nun has been exploded as a wicked calumny a hundred times over and this also the author ought to have known. On another page our author blackguards the Spanish Clergy in so unseemly a way that any serious-minded reader will put aside the book in sheer disgust.

The author's treatment of King Alfonso XIII and of Primo de Ribera are likewise unworthy of a serious historian. The General is grossly caricatured on pages 79-81, and the King is dealt with evident animosity on almost every occasion in which his name is mentioned (see pp. 18, 23, 67, 74, 86, etc.). In both cases the writer interweaves low gossip with history and obviously gives them equal value. Unfairness to King Alfonso, an avowed friend of England and a lover of everything English, should be deeply resented in this country. If only for this reason the author ought to have thought twice before recording imaginary rumours as sober fact.

Throughout the book there are a number of other historical mistakes. We will mention some of the most glaring: On page 25 Navarre is said to have formed part of the Crown of Aragón. Any Navarrese child will tell the writer that Navarre was always an independent Kingdom until its incorporation into the Crown, not of Aragón but of Spain. To this day, in the coat of arms of Spain, a quartering is allotted to the Chains of the old Kingdom of Navarre. Maura was never a Carlist (p. 31), far from it; but the leader of the Conservative-Liberals. Maurin was not a Catalan (p. 183), but an Aragonese, born in the valley of Benasque. On page 241 Royo Villano stands, we suppose, for Royo Villaneuva. The author should know that it was not *El Siglo Futuro* who first pronounced Liberalism a sin (p. 38), but Pope Pius IX. On page 236 Cardinal Segura's pastoral letter on the abdication of King Alfonso is described as "violently militant against the Government", a description which

leads one to wonder whether the writer has ever read that document. Finally, Part III, which deals with the history of Spain from 1931 to the present time, is certainly not a factual narrative, but the author's own subjective picture of the same, with suppressions and embellishments to suit his view.

The author writes on page xvi of his introduction: "To express here what I owe to the Spanish people for the kindness and hospitality I received from them during the years I spent among them would be impossible." Fully two-thirds of the same Spanish people will bitterly resent what is written about them in this book: they will have good reason to repeat the lines:

*Tus aplausos me avergüenzan,  
tus carños me dan miedo;  
tus encomios son desdenes,  
tus alabanzas denuestos;  
tus abrazos me sofocan,  
y me emvenenan tus besos.*

All true lovers of England and Spain will sadly deplore the publication of such books as this. They only help to widen the rift which separates the two countries. English books *are* read in Spain; mostly by the Catholic clergy, whom our author describes as "illiterate", "uneducated", "savage". These men whom he so wantonly calumniates cannot but be offended at his travesty of the truth. O that the university of Cambridge would use its influence and resources for the purpose of promoting friendly relations between England and Spain, instead of fathering such a mischievous, unscholarly and inaccurate work as this!

ROMANUS RIOS, O.S.B.

*The Heritage of Symbolism.* C. M. Bowra. (Macmillan. 1955.).

MR. BOWRA's approach to the poetry of the Symbolists is a subjective one. He attempts to explain the poetry to us from inside, to reconstruct the state of mind and the point of view of the poets themselves. One has the impression that Mr. Bowra is impelled to make this attempt by a very strong impulse and wish to know the poetic state from inside. But how far he has succeeded in doing so is questionable. Reading Mr. Bowra's book as a poet, I seldom felt that what he said of the nature and manner of writing poetry was true by the test of experience.

The trouble is not that Mr. Bowra has too little respect for the poet. On the contrary, he has too much, and writes as if men who make up verses are in some magical way not as other men are. Like a hen writing a text-book on swimming in the lily-pond Mr. Bowra writes with timorous admiration of poets, as if they possess a faculty that he



does not possess. And so, by his very ignorance of the poetic process, he is incapable of measuring the poetry of the Symbolists by that or any other standard, for one cannot measure an unknown quantity. It is true that the Symbolists themselves claimed that poetry is a magical, even a mystical activity. But magic and mysticism are human activities like any others. The present convention is to accept scientific reality as the only reality. But the reality of poetry and of mysticism is no less a fact, by the test of human experience, than the conventional scientific view of the moment. If the Symbolists were clear about anything, it was surely that there is a qualitative truth about the world, that must be taken into account no less than the scientific truth. That indeed is the essence of their poetry, and perhaps of all poetry.

Mr. Bowra's book is clearly a labour of love. And if in the course of 230 pages he fails to discover the essence of poetry, it is by a series of near-misses that are both tantalizing and confusing. This is an example. "In the poet's activity there is an element of what looks like pure chance. . . . Mallarmé recognized this and summarized it in his doctrine that 'un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard'. By 'le hasard' he meant the absolute uncertainty which always faces the poet." This is so nearly true. No doubt, among the many applications of that admirable line, whose applicability to almost every field of life is borne out by the experience of countless human lives, the particular application that Mr. Bowra gives it can be included. But to say that this was what Mallarmé "meant" by the line is to deny to Mallarmé the characteristic gift of a poet. Mallarmé had the genius, or "le hasard", to write a line whose wide and profound applicability makes it poetry. For it is not by its application to a poet's private world that a poem is poetry.

Here is another example, this time from the essay on Rilke. Speaking of Rilke's *Orpheus Eurydike Hermes* poem, Mr. Bowra very truly says "Rilke was not concerned with the traditional interpretation of the myth. . . . He saw the myth through his own view of death." In process of a long explanation of this, Mr. Bowra appears to find it strange that the poet should start with a "view of death"—or of life—and should fit the myth to the idea, not the idea to the myth. Surely there is nothing strange in the fact that myths, images, and words are the poet's stock in trade, and that he should give meaning to words and myths, rather than draw meaning from them?

By an accumulation of slight misplacements of emphasis like these, Mr. Bowra is badly out by the end of the book. "The magical view of poetry," he writes, "gives a special place to the poet. He is once again the 'vates', the instrument of unseen powers who work by superhuman methods. . . . In consequence he is free, as he has seldom been, to be himself, to develop his individuality and private

tastes. All (the Symbolists) feel that they must follow their own inclinations and be free to do what they choose."

This statement gives away the fact that Mr. Bowra, very rightly, really does not believe in all the alleged magic, unseen powers, and superhuman methods at all. For how, if he did so, could he deduce the apparently illogical conclusion that, since the poet is controlled by unseen powers, he is free to do as he likes? Mr. Bowra does his poets too much honour, and ordinary humanity too little. Poets have no special gift of magic. They experience the same world as Mr. Bowra himself, and all of us, for there is no other. The poet is not a superman. It is Mr. Bowra and not the poet who believes in special cases. The poet has enough faith in the universal truth of his poetry to offer it to the world. And by the test of common humanity, moved again and again by what first moves the poet, the poets are right.

Mr. Bowra does in fact after much groping reach one or two important conclusions, as he deserves to do for the assiduity of his search. "The independent external world which science presupposes, is for many reasons unsatisfactory. It demands too great a distinction between things and our awareness of them." And on the vexed question of Beauty in poetry: "For them the Beautiful was the principle that informs their art. But if they meant that the poet chooses his themes from what is generally recognized as beautiful, it is another matter. The assumption that the stuff of poetry must be confined to a recognized list of beautiful subjects can only mean that the poets are unable to break fresh ground."

As for the individual essays, one would rather have had more factual and less pious studies. Mr. Bowra may in a sense be right in assuming, as he evidently does, that a poem, if a poem at all, is beyond criticism. But that is not to say that poets and poems cannot be judged in the context of history, philosophy, and the canon of poetry itself.

Mr. Bowra sees in the Symbolist movement, whose greatest exponents were a Russian (Blok), a Czech German (Rilke), an Irishman (Yeats), and a Frenchman (Valéry), a proof that France still remains, in terms of European culture, the vitalizing source. For these poets, writing in several languages, and in the cases of Yeats, George and Blok, deeply rooted in a national tradition, drew inspiration from the movement whose great prophet was Mallarmé, and whose home was Paris. Blok hailed the coming Revolution; Yeats lamented the passing of aristocratic values. George made an idol of Germanic youth; Rilke saw in the hero only his impulse towards death. Yet all, with the possible exception of Valéry, made valid discoveries of the supernatural and mystical nature of the world. It is strangely significant that the poets of the great age of scientific materialism should be agreed on precisely this point.

This much emerges clearly from Mr. Bowra's studies. And yet, a less ambitious study of the Symbolists, confined to sources, literary and otherwise, facts and verbatim statements from the records left by the poets themselves and those who knew them, would have been a better and more permanently valuable book. The clearest statement of the Symbolists' philosophy, mystical or otherwise, remains their own compelling poetry. It is possible to cast light on poems by bringing forward facts bearing on its language and context. But to explain the meaning of poetry, which is its own simplest statement, should probably never be attempted. As it is, the poets themselves are less obscure than Mr. Bowra's paraphrases, suspended uncertainly between the extremes of scientific literalness and superstitious credulity, neither of which states is known to poetry.

Valéry, himself the author of some of the finest criticism ever written on the subject of poetry, has issued a warning on the subject of the dangers of the very attempt that Mr. Bowra has made. In an article, "Au sujet du Cimetière Marin", written in reply to a critic, M. Cohen, who had undertaken to explain Valéry's great poem, having granted that "M. Cohen . . . a recherché mes intentions avec un soin et une méthode remarquables. Enfin je suis très, reconnaissant de m'avoir si lucidement expliqué aux jeunes gens ses élèves"; Valéry concludes with these words: "*Il n'y a pas de vrai sens d'un texte*". Pas d'autorité de l'auteur. Quoi qu'il a voulu dire, il a écrit ce qu'il a écrit. Une fois publié, un texte est comme un appareil dont chacun peut se servir à sa guise et selon ses moyens: il n'est pas sûr que le constructeur en use mieux qu'un autre. Du reste, s'il sait bien ce qu'il voulait faire, cette connaissance trouble toujours en lui la perception de ce qu'il a fait."

KATHLEEN RAINE.

Charles Péguy: *Basic Verities*. Extracts in prose and poetry. (Pantheon, New York.)

It sometimes happens that at the moment of its utmost grief, which is often the moment of its clearest self-discovery, a nation will find among its poets one who is a prophet also. This voice will be the highest common denominator of popular emotion, enshrining the hopes of the multitude, but eschewing the frenzy of the mob. There has been no one since Wordsworth who so incarnated the emotions of the English—the romanticism which is the nearest we get to revolution, or to reaction either. But the French have been fortunate to find a voice which can unite them when they are outwardly divided; a voice that can speak with eloquence and authority for the part of them that looks towards God and the part of them that looks towards man. It has been the tragedy of the French that too few of

them have looked in both directions. It was the triumph and the greatness of Charles Péguy that he did.

The present volume, which comes to us with many other French books from New York, clamouring for English publication, is rather pedantically named. But it does present the thought and expression—the same thought, the strange expression—of Péguy in a very convenient form. There are some tributes to begin with—from André Gide, Cardinal Verdier, Maurice Barrés, Emmanuel Mounier, and Henri Bergson. These names alone testify to the reconciling power of Péguy's genius. Then there is a long introduction by Julien Green, one of the three or four best novelists now writing in the French language. And the rest of the book is composed of extracts from Péguy's poetry and prose, arranged under such headings as Destitution and Poverty, Politics and Mysticism, The Jews, War and Peace, God and France. These have been rendered into English by Anne and Julien Green, with the French and English versions side by side.

Mounier (now held in a Vichy prison) writes that: "Péguy is a man who cannot be annexed. . . . Each sincere party can draw from this precise and ardent dialectic the living germs of rejuvenation. The day will come, and it is close at hand, when one of our greatest poets and a prophetic thinker will be recognized at his true value." That day has come. Péguy has been quoted by Vichy and by the resisting French to their separate purposes. This does not mean that Péguy is ambiguous; it only means that some of his disciples do not see him as a whole. It does not mean that he is compromising; it only means that he is comprehensive. *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité* and *Travail, Famille, Patrie* are all good things and in no way, rightly understood, do they exclude one another. Péguy saw this, because he was a peasant and not a partisan. It is a pity more Frenchmen cannot see it also, for it is upon these reconciliations that the welfare of France depends.

Péguy called himself a socialist, but, as another admirer has written, "his socialism, or more exactly the eminent dignity which he bestowed upon poverty in the world, was already the Gospel. Péguy's socialism was far more akin to the socialism of St. Francis than to that of Karl Marx." He called himself a Christian, but he never received the Sacraments (at any rate, not to our certain knowledge), and when he walked as a pilgrim to Chartres he halted on the threshold of the Cathedral, not venturing to go in. His Catholicism was profound, but it was also tangential and subjective. For this his wife must take a large share of blame; she refused the regularization of their marriage, which was necessary before he could approach the altar. Much of this story is obscure, and all of it is sad. M. Green has touched on it very lightly, but there is a more detailed discussion



in Madame Maritain's memoirs, *Les Grandes Amitiés*. This fascinating book still awaits an English publisher.

Péguy never ceased to look for that "Harmonious City" which had held his hopes long before he became a Christian. Consequently he was never tempted to divorce prayer from action; the world of today and tomorrow from the world to come. For Péguy the Harmonious City and the Heavenly City were inseparable quests. This rigorous social conscience makes him the man for the modern situation. He saw the breakdown of capitalism, and he saw through the egalitarian remedy.

"When all men are provided with the necessities, the real necessities, with bread and books, what do we care about the distribution of luxury?" But Péguy was very clear about destitution, and his diagnosis is applicable to our whole society.

"A city secure on all sides but one is not a city. A real individual misfortune, a real individual destitution, poison a whole city."

He is magnificent on the dignity of work. Speaking of the artisans of his youth, he links his voice over the years with Eric Gill:

"A chair-rung had to be well made. That was an understood thing. That was the first thing. It wasn't that the chair-rung had to be well made for the salary, or on account of the salary. It wasn't that it was well made for the boss, nor for connoisseurs, nor for the boss's clients. It had to be well made itself, in itself, for itself, in its very self. A tradition coming, springing from deep within the race, a history, an absolute, an honour, demanded that this chair-rung be well made. Every part of the chair which could not be seen was just as perfectly made as the parts that could be seen. This was the self-same principle of Cathedrals."

This is a good example of Péguy's sociology, and also of his style. Many people find him unreadable, but there is a reason in his rhythm and a method in his monotony which André Gide has discovered for us:

"Péguy's style is like that of very ancient litanies. . . . It is like the pebbles of the desert which follow and resemble each other so closely, one so much like the other, but yet a tiny bit different; and with a difference that corrects itself, recovers possession of itself, repeats itself, seems to repeat itself, stresses itself, and always more clearly; and one goes ahead."

From all accounts, one does indeed "go ahead". A Christian writer who can attract minds so different, and differing, as Maritain, Massis, and Gide, is obviously of exceptional importance. Péguy's present popularity is a signpost of the way France is moving; it is among the more hopeful signs of her future. Is there any modern English writer who sums up the best of England as Péguy sums up the best of France? Chesterton is much the nearest to Péguy in the

generosity of his heart and mind, and he is, of all our recent writers, the most patriotic in sentiment and the most universal in idea. I believe that in years to come Englishmen may find in Chesterton a great deal of what Frenchmen have found in Péguy; for in both writers there are the virtue of hope and the values of tradition.

ROBERT SPEAIGHT.

*La Vie Française.* By A. D. Sertillanges, O.P. Préface de J. T. Delos, O.P. (Les Éditions Variétés, Montreal. 7s. 6d.)

IN writing about the renewal of France Père Sertillanges goes to the very roots of the modern disease and thus succeeds in describing in considerable detail the elements of a new order which must be established far beyond his own country if civilization is to return to health. Not that he has yet another plan for social security: in fact, he points out at the very beginning that it is precisely the search for plans which is delaying the healing of the world:

On étonne bien des gens en parlant ainsi. Ils attendent tout du dehors. Ils ne rêvent que de *plans*. Le "planisme" nous a obsédés pendant toute une génération. Plans pour trouver de l'argent là où il n'y en a pas, pour obtenir un rendement de travaux qui ne sont pas fournis, etc. . . . Il n'est venu qu'à bien peu l'idée de chercher le mal ailleurs que dans les faits embrouillés, de le voir dans les esprits faussés, dans les coeurs irrités, dans les sentiments dévoyés, dans la baisse de la moralité privée et publique.

In a word, the origins of the disease are to be sought in the individual conscience; and from there the cure must begin.

Within the space of some 250 pages he examines, with the confidence of a master, the state of conscience of Western man in every aspect of his life, private and public: the family, the state, religion, science and art, culture and civilization. His trained theological mind sees all these things from the aspect of morality, as spheres in which *human acts* take place, and he assigns responsibility judiciously, calmly, fearlessly.

But he is far more than a theologian. He writes of religion as a deeply spiritual man, of art as one who is himself an artist, of science as one of the most outstanding French intellectuals of the twentieth century. And as the renewal is considered primarily in its effect on France, there runs through these pages an ardent love for his country and a supreme confidence in her power of leadership in European civilization; it is tempered, but not suppressed, by his recognition of the contingency of all created things.

La France s'étend dans l'espace et dans la durée. Elle était; elle est; elle sera. N'est-ce pas ce que nous voulons signifier quand nous parlons, avec une grandiloquence un peu gênante en certains cas, de la France éternelle?

Dieu seul est éternel; mais la France est campée dans la durée comme

peu de nations y peuvent prétendre. Elle regarde l'avenir, à partir du passé lointain, comme le promontoire de son sol fait face à l'océan et s'appuie à l'Asie profonde.

How shall that eternity be secured and civilization be maintained? What forms will the newest *Gesta Dei per Francos* take?

The renewal must certainly come from France herself. She cannot go begging from others: "On ne fait pas l'aumône aux nations." In fact, she must gently repudiate the well-meant intervention of foreigners, while welcoming them when they come to receive something: "Pour nous visiter, soit! ils seront toujours les bienvenus. Mais se mêler à nous largement, au risque d'altérer notre esprit familial, fût-ce par un apport digne d'honneur, c'est autre chose."

It must be a spiritual revival. And that in France can only come through the Catholic Church: "Nous sommes catholiques. Convaincus que le catholicisme est la vérité, nous souhaitons que tous y adhèrent." But the fact of division must be accepted. The Church must demand only the liberty to which she has a right and the confidence which she truly merits. Privileges would only compromise her. Being a good theologian he takes a large view of Catholicism. If he dislikes laicism in the schools, he still will not allow scapulars and medals to replace instruction on the ten commandments and the sermon on the mount. He is prepared to associate in the work of renewal Christian men of all confessions, only excluding the enemies of the faith:

Les ennemis de notre foi, ce sont les hommes sans foi, ou pour mieux dire les ennemis de toute foi; ce ne sont pas les fidèles des autres croyances. Nous disons volontiers entre nous, en parlant des protestants ou des orthodoxes: nos frères séparés. L'expression est sincère, et nous ne demandons qu'à l'étendre à tous les hommes droits. Un beau génie et une âme généreuse, le Père Gratry, nous y encourage, lui qui définissait l'Eglise—après explication, s'entend—: *la société des âmes de bonne volonté*.

La formule est large! Elle est exacte pourtant. Ceux qu'elle vise sont compris dans ce que nous appelons traditionnellement *l'âme de l'Eglise*. Nous n'allons pas répudier notre âme.

In that spirit of co-operation, always having regard to the supreme importance of a rightly ordered conscience, a plan becomes possible:

Tout ce qui se dit et tout ce qui s'écrit, en ce temps d'inquiétude et de retour sur soi-même, en ce temps de reclassement et de revision des valeurs, conclut à ceci: nous sommes et nous voulons rester une civilisation chrétienne. Nous voulons retenir ce que le christianisme a apporté au monde: le sens de la personne humaine et de son éminente dignité; la conception de l'autorité comme service public, de la fraternité comme

formule de rapports entre citoyens, du respect à l'égard du foyer uni et durable, de la femme compagne de l'homme et non pas esclave, de l'enfant, cette fragile graine d'humanité.

The prospect described by Zola, "la grande et rude besogne de toute une France à refaire", has to be faced again; but this courageous book, written by an old man in a defeated country occupied by enemy troops, is a guarantee that the task will be undertaken and that its successful accomplishment will be the beginning of the salvation of Europe.

EDWARD QUINN.

*The Realm of a Rain-Queen: A Study of the Pattern of Lovedu Society.*

By E. Jenson Krige and J. D. Krige, with a Foreword by Field-Marshal J. C. Smuts. (Published for the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures by The Oxford University Press, 1943. 21s.)

THIS is an interesting and intimate study of a small people in a remote district of the North-east Transvaal who owe their importance to the sacred prestige of their matriarchal dynasty of queen magicians. It was this prestige which preserved their assistance and independence in the age when the Zulus and the Matabele were conquering and devastating all the neighbouring lands, and it survives today in an enfeebled condition under the even more formidable pressure of European culture contact. Hence the study is of great value for the light that it throws on the religious basis of Bantu society and the way in which the social structure and pattern of life is bound up with intangible psychological factors which the ordinary European observer fails to understand.

The authors show how deep and far-reaching and subtle is the conflict now going on between the native and the European cultures. It is not a militant one, since the matriarchal tradition of the chieftainship has given the tribe a pacific non-aggressive character in contrast to that of its neighbours. The impact of European culture is met not with open resistance but by an attitude of withdrawal and secretiveness, which encourages evasiveness and deception and renders co-operation and understanding on the part of the white man impossible. "The good man is he who can circumvent the European, and conversely, sometimes, the comprehensible European is he who has cheated the Native." This, of course, refers to the pagan majority, not the Christian minority, for during the last fifty years the native Christians have formed the natural intermediaries between the Lovedu and the white man. Unfortunately the missionaries have adopted an attitude of such uncompromising hostility to the native culture that the conflict in the religious sphere is even sharper than in secular affairs. "The policy in the past has never been to graft the new upon the old; it has been to destroy the cultural pattern and to substitute



another, irrespective of whether it could be woven into the remainder of the social scheme or harmonized with existing beliefs and institutions." "Christianity draws the individual away from all things tribal", and every effort has been made to make the segregation as complete as possible, even in such external things as the style of dress, the type of house (which is square instead of round), and in withdrawal from the tribal legal and political organization. Nevertheless it seems that the Christians have been unable to escape the psychological influence of their environment. They still believe in the magical powers of the queen, which form the centre of the tribal culture-pattern, and they are said to be even more prone to witchcraft than their pagan neighbours. "In our opinion," write the authors, "the total situation may be summed up in the words of a Christian informant who has maintained intact his tribal background: Education gives men the power of witchcraft, and when we are all educated we shall all be witches, but, like Europeans, quite harmless to one another!"

This remark certainly gives one something to think about, and the whole book, with its patient analysis of the social complexities of this tiny area in a relatively accessible part of Africa, makes one realize the immense problems involved in the European contact with the cultures of Africa, of which the surface has as yet hardly been surveyed. The economic revolution—the change in the material conditions of life—which inevitably follows in the steps of the white man is already undermining the foundations of native culture and preparing the way for a spiritual revolution out of which a new African culture may eventually emerge. What part is Christianity going to play in this change? It is obvious that the missionary has an even greater responsibility than the administrator or the anthropologist, for he alone is directly concerned with the heart of the problem—the transformation of spiritual values and the creation of new patterns of behaviour and ways of thought.

The traditional pagan culture is a profoundly liturgical one—in deed, the life of the tribe is that of a church rather than a state, though it is a church of the earth, bound to the cycle of agriculture and the family. Such a culture can only be transformed positively by a liturgical religion—a religion that reinterprets life in a liturgical form: which provides a new pattern of common rites and ceremonial to take the place of those which are being destroyed or are passing away. But before this is possible it is necessary for the missionary to have a very intimate understanding of the spirit and form of the culture that he is seeking to transform, and it is clear that in the case of the Lovedu, as in the case of so many other African peoples, this condition has not yet been fulfilled.

C. DAWSON.

*Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time.* By Harold J. Laski. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd. 15s.)

PROFESSOR LASKI is profoundly convinced that the Prime Minister is as ignorant of the real meaning of this war as Burke was of the significance of the French Revolution. "The premisses of Mr. Churchill's thinking are set by the old world that is dying, as Burke's were set in 1789; he is unable to see the outlines of the new world that is struggling to be born." Nor is the Labour Party much more enlightened. It is wedded to a short-term policy of social reform and is far more concerned in finding "safe" seats for trade union officials than in securing adequate representation for its far-sighted intellectuals. Thus Professor Laski, assuming the mantle and method of Burke, but conscious only of the new world that is struggling to be born, reflects on the "revolution" of our time, the essential context of which has been set by the experience of Soviet Russia.

Granted his assumptions, Professor Laski's thesis admits of no easy answer. But these assumptions are so large and so gratuitous that the book can bring real conviction only to those who are already converted. For most of us it can yield only stimulus, provocation, and sharp disagreement. What are these assumptions? First and foremost, as might be expected, is the strictly materialist and Marxist approach to all contemporary problems. The real secret of our present woes is that the relations of production in Europe are no longer proportionate to the forces of production. Capitalism, everywhere in a state of contraction, has engendered militarism and imperialism. It has inspired the counter-revolution of the Fascist dictators, who are essentially the *condottieri* of sinister vested interests. It follows from this general position that all thought, political and religious, is but the ideological superstructure of a given system of production and distribution. There are no ultimate values: only values that are relative to a particular economic system.

While remaining within the prison bars of this materialist philosophy, which radically conditions and largely vitiates his major conclusions, Professor Laski gives vent *en passant* to many interesting observations and reflections. He prepares a damning indictment of the British foreign policy of the Baldwin-Chamberlain epoch which might well have come from the mouth of Mr. Churchill. He is studiously moderate in his chapter on Soviet Russia, weighing the merits and defects of the Stalinist régime with something like academic objectivity. If the central principle of the Russian Revolution, "planned production for community consumption", is superior to anything yet evolved in the West, the rulers of that country have been profoundly corrupted by the exercise of absolute power and all true freedom is emphatically at a discount.

The weakness of the materialist analysis is most evident when

Professor Laski turns his attention to the present condition of Great Britain. True to his thesis of the irresistible motivating power of impersonal economic forces, he holds that, unless a thoroughgoing instalment of State Socialism ("a revolution by consent") is introduced during the war, the country will undergo a revolution by violence at the end of the war. Why? Because, in the writer's own words, the relations of production in this country are in contradiction with the forces of production. Capitalism has entered its last stage of contraction: the stage of monopoly and restrictionism. The only alternative to a full measure of State Socialism is a counter-revolution on the Fascist model. In this way Professor Laski sacrifices to a cherished and hardly-held theory the whole of the peaceful, tolerant, and democratic political tradition of this country. More. He allows himself to ignore completely the whole of that large intermediate area in English life in which, in recent years, the principles of private ownership and public control have been judiciously combined. This characteristically English achievement of compromise, this *via media* between individualism and Socialism, represented by such bodies as the London Passenger Transport Board, the Central Electricity Board, the Port of London Authority, and other analogous institutions, are necessarily excluded from the rigid clear-cut categories of Professor Laski's analysis. The pragmatic and empirical character of the English political tradition, its compromises and accommodations, are quite irreconcilable with the plain antitheses of Marxist doctrine. To one reader, at least, the experience of turning from the pages of Laski to those of Edmund Burke is like emerging from the darkness of night into the clear light of day.

R. A. L. SMITH.

*Fundamentals of Peace.* By the Rev. Edward Quinn. (Burns Oates. 2s. 6d. wrapper, 3s 6d. cloth, 69 pp.)

It is with precision that Fr. Quinn has entitled this small but densely woven book *Fundamentals of Peace*. An enquiry into the intellectual foundations of a Christian new order as adumbrated in the Pope's Five Peace Points of Christmas, 1939, it is concerned not with their fruit—their external applications in the social, political and juridical spheres—but with their roots, the doctrinal background from which they draw sustenance, their underlying spiritual principles too often ignored by those eager to underline—as they can with reason—the many concordances between the papal utterance and such Allied documents as the Atlantic Charter.

In contradistinction to the departmentalized view of life to which we have become accustomed by an insidious secularization of thought, Fr. Quinn presents the Christian synthesis, in which the temporal is meaningless unrelated to the eternal, while Original Sin,

the Incarnation and the Redemption are axial facts of which the effects are apparent in every domain, and nature is penetrated by supernatural grace. The crisis of the world today he shows as a crisis of faith, with a scepticism that has reached the pitch of doubting reason itself, and thus the validity of truth and the possibility of its attainment. There can be healing only in a Christian renovation, a restored perception of the true place of man in the universe and his function in the Providential plan by which each creature serves God in fulfilment of its being, a fulfilment which in the case of fallen man needs the aid of grace. Because all truths are inter-related, and knowledge of God founded on Divine Revelation must bring "a more accurate knowledge of creatures even in their natural activities", the Catholic world-conception has a security which no other ideology possesses, and it is the Church's mission to preach not only the Gospel but "the truths of political and social philosophy which appear to be direct consequences of the Gospel teaching", and this not to those of her visible fellowship alone but to the whole world.

In this conception, justice, the essential pre-requisite of peace, must, as the Pope explicitly notes, be quickened by the thirst for the supernatural justice proclaimed as a beatitude in the Sermon on the Mount, which supposes the moral virtue of justice as its natural foundation. International law (founded like all law on recognition of the fact of sin) is shown as the work of Christian men "acutely conscious of their obligation to act as the instruments of Christ in establishing peace on earth". Peace will come only through the leaven of the inner peace which Christ came to bring.

To establish the peace that is the tranquillity of order will demand the co-operation of all men of goodwill—goodwill, indispensable condition of peace, and condition also of the aid of grace to those not visibly within the Catholic fold. In charity, the love of God and of our neighbour for God's sake, those not united in faith may find a basis of union—in the Pope's words, in "that universal love which is the compendium and most general expression of the Christian ideal, and which therefore may serve as a common ground also for those who have not the blessing of sharing the same faith with us".

Ignorance of theology on the part of the Catholic intelligentsia and ignorance of the fundamentals of Catholic doctrine on the part of the masses, explain, Fr. Quinn notes, the too feeble part played by Catholics in the public life of our time. It has been his aim to show how "in the message proclaimed by the Church is the one secure basis for rebuilding a broken world, ignorant of its Lord and unaware of the unique and ineffable way in which He has revealed Himself". Here is for Catholics a challenge and a responsibility.

B. B. C.



